

For the Love of doG

Much to President's chagrin, Bard dogs roam free on campus

by **John Garrett**

NOT MANY STUDENTS are aware of Bard's rich history of the Dog Culture. Being such a divinely beautiful campus, romantically nestled in the heart of the Hudson River Valley, dogs from all over the world have migrated to roam Bard's lush acreage. Since the beginning of time, that was the way it was, until. . .

"... At Franconia what we do is the people who insist on having dogs... live off campus," President Botstein said in an interview with the *Observer* in 1975. "... they live off campus and they're subject to leash laws and other things... if the dogs are on campus they are carted away by the town... and the owners have to retrieve them at their own expense."

Upon his appointment of President of Bard College, Botstein exiled dogs to life off of Bard property. In fact, this was probably the very first cultural dispute Bard College had during Botstein's continuing tenure here as president. Some attributed the banishment to the rampant mounds of doodie that plagued the campus in the early years of the seventies. Others claimed that the packs of wild dogs which ran, ate, and slept together were an obstacle to "learning and thinking, the principle goals of Bard College."

Whatever the reason, it seems the Bard College of the '90s and '00s—Generation X to Generation Nothing—is moving in the right direction for dogs of all races and breeds. "When laws aren't enforced, law-breakers can do as they please," stated one Bard administrator. "Over the years—my guess is since Botstein has been stepping in less and less dog shit—dogs have slowly been able to come out of hiding."

Still, these dogs have, for the most part, had to remain bound

to their owners, or an ashtray, or a lamp-post, or a bike rack, or a tree, or a sandwich, or whatever the hell their owners can find to tie them up to.

"Woof... Dog Culture as my forefathers woof woof knew it at Bard is terribly different than it is now," claims Beta, a two and a half year old dog owned by professor Matthew Deady. "I remember woof the stories my grandfather used to woof woof tell me—of the free-roaming woof woof woof bands we dogs used to cling to. WOOF! Don't get me wrong, Bard woof is a wonderful place, but it is not the same. The woof woof Golden Age for us dogs is over. WOOF!!!"

When asked what he likes most about Bard, Beta commented, "Sticks! Woof! Sticks and WOOF WOOF!!! Leaves!" Indeed, Bard is blessed with a great deal of sticks and leaves, and if you know Beta, you'd understand why he loves those sticks and leaves so much. As he told the *Observer* in this exclusive interview, "Most woofwoofwoof college students have tons of work woof woof to do, but at Bard students have tons of time to throw sticks and woof woof woof leaves for me all day long."

Along with Beta, Katherine Gulley's campus celebrity dog, Tristan, had a lot to say about the state of campus Dog Culture. "I can remember when heh-heh-heh Bostein wasn't around and I had V.I.P. status all around this heh-heh damned campus, but what the hell heh-heh-heh-heh-heh, I really don't mind being tied up and pet by all of the phony Bard heh-heh-heh-heh-heh animal lovers."

Currently, Johannes S. Michael Friedmann III, is leading an underground charge to officially reinstate the rights of Bard dogs. It is rumored that he has a



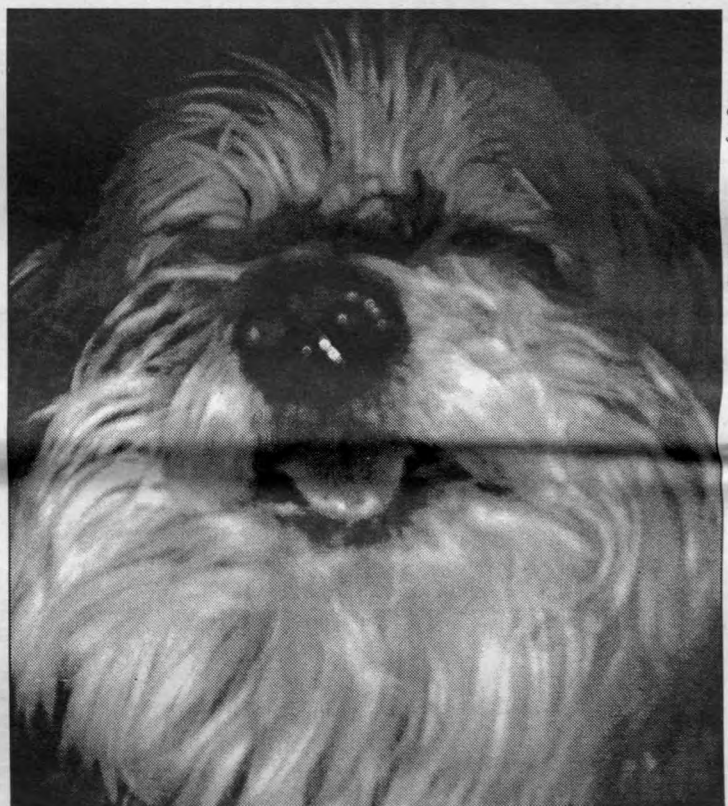
Jamie O'Shea

contingency of some four hundred dogs who to this day remain in hiding.

One Bard senior who asked to remain anonymous claimed to have witnessed one of their meetings. "I saw them—hundreds of dogs—chanting a vow to regain status as members of this community. Unless it really was the hallucinogenic mold I ate that morning, this campus is in for a big surprise. Personally, though—I think that would be a change for the better. I love dogs, think of having one for every three of us students."

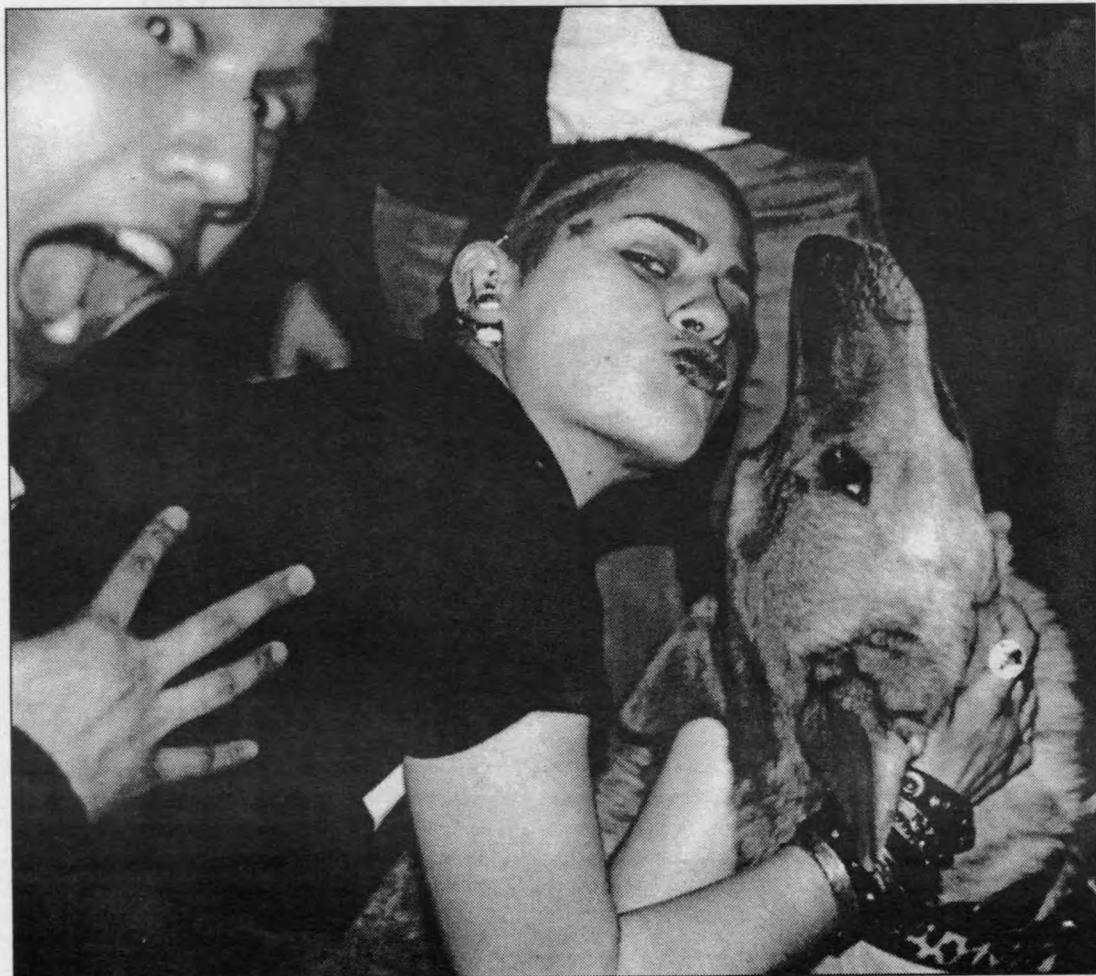
Regardless of how many dogs Bard campus really has, or what the general sentiment toward dog rights actually is on campus, it is good to see things moving in the right direction. Hopefully this will be one step that helps Bard reestablish itself as a haven for multi-cultural tolerance. GO DAWGS!!

Mike Morini



Deirdre Faughey

Viva los carros!: (above) the suspected ring-leader of the canine insurgency; (middle) Danny, Deirdre Faughey's maltese; (below) Kim hugs another loveable pooch.





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Fed to State: New Court Rulings

Abortion rights on the line in 2000 Elections

by **Deirdre Faughey**

WHEN A STATE COURT trial is unsuccessful, Federal court is often the only other course of action. The Supreme Court decided that Christy Brzonkala, an alleged rape victim, had to be content with the State trial she received—and the law did not find the accused rapist guilty. The shift of power from Federal to State courts could have a major impact on women's issues in the future, specifically, abortion. Presidential Candidate, George W. Bush, is in favor of making abortion a State issue.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN:

Christy Brzonkala filed an \$8.3 million civil lawsuit against Antonio Morrison and James Crawford, two football players at Virginia Polytech Institute who she said raped her at a party in October 1994. The depression that set in after the offense prevented her from informing the police until 1995. In April 1996 a grand jury failed to indict the accused rapists. Brzonkala's only other viable option was to turn to the 1994 Violence Against Women Act—it must have seemed like her last chance.

After the alleged rape, Brzonkala dropped out of college and suffered an economic consequence of a lesser education and fewer job opportunities. The Violence Against Women Act maintains that violence against women has an adverse impact on interstate commerce by reducing women's capacity to produce goods and services nationwide, impeding travel because of safety concerns, among others. Because of this, she was able to apply the Commerce Clause to her case.

The U.S. Supreme Court, however, struck down a provision of the law that gave women such as Brzonkala the power to file federal civil lawsuits against their attackers.

The 5-4 court ruling determined that prosecuting such crimes is the state's responsibility.

The result is that state power is boosted, and federal power curbed. Despite the arguments of the Clinton administration, the court ruled that the Violence Against Women Act had no basis in the Constitution's Commerce Clause or the 14th Amendment, even though crimes against women hurt the economy by forcing victims to pay for treatment or making them scared to travel out of state because of safety concerns.

The court ruled that the connection between gender and crimes and their affect on interstate commerce is tenuous at best—it repeatedly quoted its 1995 ruling in *U.S. v. Lopez*, in which the court struck down a federal criminal law that outlawed carrying guns to schools, saying that it was a matter the states, not the federal government, should regulate.

Chief Justice William Rehnquist wrote the majority opinion in *U.S. v. Morrison*, which said that only states have jurisdiction in prosecuting crimes in which the victims were targeted because of their gender.

SUPREME COURT JUSTICES:

Now, more than ever, Supreme Court Justices play a pivotal role with issues concerning women. The next president may have the opportunity to appoint enough Supreme Court Justices so that the Supreme Court overturns *Roe/Casey*—the ruling that currently gives women abortion rights. If an anti-choice President is elected, it is likely that this will happen.

On average, each President appoints 2.8 Justices. Either two or three new anti-choice Justices are sufficient to guarantee *Roe's* demise. Unfortunately, three of the four oldest members of the Court recognize that the Constitution protects the right to choose an abortion under either *Roe* or *Casey*, and they're close to retirement.

Since the Senate is likely to

remain anti-choice, anti-choice Justices who would overturn *Roe/Casey* are likely to be nominated by an anti-choice president and confirmed by an anti-choice Senate. Currently, there are only 32 pro-choice members of the Senate, and pro-choice Senators such as Republican John Chafee of Rhode Island have announced that they will not seek reelection in 2000.

ABORTION RIGHTS:

Among the candidates for the Presidential Election, Vice President Al Gore is in favor of a

signed 18 anti-choice provisions into law. He supports a constitutional amendment to ban abortion. He opposes abortion except in cases of rape, incest or when the woman's life is endangered. He opposed protecting women and doctors from violence at reproductive health clinics and facilities. He supports prohibiting medical providers at federally funded family planning clinics from discussing abortion as a legal medical option. He supports laws requiring parental consent before a minor can obtain an abortion or family planning services. He would deny doctors the

ernment should play no role in a woman's decision to have an abortion. In a May 7 interview on *Meet the Press*, Nader said, "This is something that should be privately decided with the family, woman, all the other private factors of it, but we should work toward preventing the necessity of abortion." He also believes that *Roe v. Wade* is safe and that the GOP should back off pushing it. "I don't think that *Roe v. Wade* will ever be overturned. I think the Republicans will destroy their party if they push this to the limit."

Similar to the Brzonkala

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woman's right to choose, while Texas Governor George W. Bush wants to end legal abortion.

While in the Senate, Al Gore voted 40 out of 51 times to protect the right to choose, with 7 abstentions. He co-sponsored the Freedom of Choice Act, which would have codified *Roe v. Wade* into law. He also opposed laws that require parental consent before a minor can obtain family planning services. "I will always, always defend a woman's right to choose," he said in his "Women for Gore" speech on June 1, 1999. "Every time Congress has tried to play politics with that fundamental personal right—imposing gag rules, and attaching anti-choice language to any bill they can think of—we have stood up to them and stopped them. If they try it again, we'll stop them again."

As Governor, George W. Bush

right to determine the safest medical procedures for their patients, even when the woman's health is at risk. Finally, he also supports unnecessary waiting periods before a woman can obtain an abortion.

On his web page, Bush has stated, "I believe that life is valuable, even when in it is unwanted, even when it is physically imperfect. I believe our society has a responsibility to defend the vulnerable and the weak. And I believe our nation should set a goal: that unborn children should be welcomed in life and protected in law. This is the ideal: a generous society that values every life. I know there are many steps on this road. A democracy is ruled by consensus, not by edict. Laws are changed as minds are persuaded."

Ralph Nader, candidate for the Green Party, believes the gov-

case, Bush thinks that abortion is one of the difficult issues that should be decided by individual states rather than the federal government. Could America become divided on the issue of abortion? *There is already diminishing access to abortions in New York State. Forty-two percent of New York counties have no abortion provider, 23 providers were lost between 1992 and 1996; the number fell from 289 to 266. Although voices as disparate as United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn, and U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright called for the "full integration of women's human rights into the policies and practices of national governments and international agencies," very little has actually been done.*

Vermont Passes Gay Marriage Bill

On Tuesday, April 25, the Vermont House of Representatives passed a final version of the "civil union" bill that will give gay and lesbian couples the same rights and benefits afforded to married couples under state law by a vote of 79-68. The following day Gov. Howard Dean (D) signed the landmark bill into law.

Opponents made one last attempt to derail the bill before the final vote. A Republican representative proposed delaying the vote until November 30, after the fall elections, but the move was defeated 84-63. The first civil union ceremonies could take place after July 1.

In a preliminary vote in March, the Vermont House voted in favor of a comprehensive civil union bill, and earlier in April the Vermont Senate voted in favor of a bill as well. It allows for gays and lesbians to take part in civil unions, just as heterosexual couples can marry.

Same-sex couples will be entitled to

all 300 or more benefits available under state law to married couples—including medical decisions, estate inheritance, overseeing burials, transferring property and certain tax breaks. Town clerks would be authorized to give same-sex couples licenses, and clergy, justices of the peace or judges would make their unions official. Family divorce courts would handle the dissolution of civil unions.

Gay rights activists have faced many obstacles prior to the signing of the "civil union" bill. These have included the Defense of Marriage Act and the dismissal of *Baker v. State of Vermont*.

In September of 1996, Congress passed and President Clinton signed the so-called Defense of Marriage Act. The DOMA was written by anti-gay extremists in an attempt to permit the federal government and all 50 states to deny recognition of gay-marriages performed in any other state. It denies same-sex couples hun-

dreds of legal rights and responsibilities that come with civil marriage. As of last March, 29 states had passed legislation similar to the federal law.

One year later, on July 22, 1997 three couples filed suit against the state of Vermont, claiming that the state's refusal to issue marriage licenses to them violates both state marriage laws and the state constitution. The case is known as *Baker v. State of Vermont*.

Despite the protection afforded to Vermont citizens by the state constitution, the court dismissed the plaintiffs' complaint on December 19, 1997, holding that same-sex marriage was not a fundamental right because recognition of such a relationship is not rooted in the people's traditions and consciousness. The court held that homosexuals are not a suspect class because homosexuality is not readily discernible like race, and stated that homosexuals are not politically powerless, as evidenced by Vermont's anti-discrimination laws protecting sexual orientation in

other areas of the law.

The court claimed that Vermont's marriage laws do not discriminate on the basis of gender either because other laws affect men and women equally. Lastly, the court addressed the state's justifications for banning same-sex marriage. Although the court found only one of the state's seven justifications mildly rational, the state's interest in "furthering the link between procreation and child rearing," the court held that one justified reason is enough to uphold the ban.

On January 15, 1998, the three couples appealed their case to the Vermont Supreme Court, and on November 18 argued their case before the Court. As in the lower court, the State Supreme Court argued that the Vermont Constitution's Common Benefits Clause prevents the state from interfering with the fundamental right to marry simply because the couple are of the same sex.

Nearly two years later, on December ... continued on page 5

New Academic Opportunities Open Up at Rockefeller U.

FOR BARD COLLEGE and Rockefeller University, the upcoming fall semester will kick off the new integrated science program. For the first time, these two institutions will be working together to benefit students from both schools, offering Bard students the opportunity to study science at Rockefeller University and giving Rockefeller students access to Bard's faculty and curriculum.

As one of the world's top research institutions, Rockefeller University offers both a curriculum and a perspective on science—as well as instant credibility—to students at Bard who have comparatively limited options. In turn, Bard offers Rockefeller students the chance to experience learning from the seminar-based, liberal arts viewpoint that Rockefeller is not able to provide.

"This unique arrangement between Bard College and the Rockefeller University demonstrates how contrasting institutions of distinction can collaborate to create new opportunities for their students and faculty," said Bard President Leon Botstein.

The first course to be offered to Bard students in this program will be a seminar course entitled "Bacteria, Viruses and Cancer: Perspectives on Human Disease." It will be a collaboratively taught course, with Rockefeller President Arnold J. Levine, Dean Sidney Strickland, Dr. Terry Gaasterland, and Dr. Betsy Hanson all working as instructors. The course will have fifteen Bard first and second year students, travel to Rockefeller once a week to have dinner and sit through the three hour course.

There are several details which are involved in this program. Rockefeller's Summer Undergraduate Research Fellow (SURF) will have spots reserved for Bard students to work in Rockefeller research labs and have room and board provided. Rockefeller graduate students, as well as post-graduate fellows will be given the opportunity to gain teaching experience at Bard and some Rockefeller graduate students will take computer science courses at Bard.

Bard will assist Rockefeller's secondary school student and

faculty outreach programs, providing resources from the Institute for Writing and Thinking. Bard also has a planned Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program which Rockefeller is going to assist in developing. Bard faculty will also be aiding Rockefeller in graduate recruiting, using Bard's influence in the liberal arts undergraduate community as a resource.

"The Bard-Rockefeller Program will allow for extensive consultation between those with scientific and liberal arts backgrounds, enriching the perspectives of all involved," says Rockefeller President Arnold J. Levine. "Bard students and faculty will interact with leading scientists, and Rockefeller will have the opportunity to expand and extend its outreach to small prestigious colleges."

Bard will also be looking to Rockefeller for basic advice for the direction of Bard's science program. The College will have Rockefeller faculty joining and advisory board for Bard's science initiative. Terry Gaasterland, Ph. D., will be Rockefeller's new addition to the board, which is chaired by Nobel Laureate Stanley Prusiner, M.D., professor of neurology at UC-San Francisco, and also seats Ph. D. professors from universities such as Johns Hopkins and Stanford.

Stated Botstein, "The creativity shown by the Rockefeller University and the program's advisory committee point to new paths for institutional cooperation and the development of enthusiasm for science among future college students."

To administer the program, Bard and Rockefeller have set up a joint board which will consist of faculty from both institutions as well as one senior administrator from each school. The Rockefeller representatives will be: Gaasterland; Sidney Strickland, Ph. D., dean and vice president for educational affairs; Bonnie Kaiser, Ph. D., director of the Science Outreach Program; and Alice Lustig, executive vice president. Bard will send Robert Martin, Ph. D., dean of Graduate Studies; Matthew Deady, Ph. D., professor of physics; and Michael Tibbitts, Ph. D., professor of biology.

—John Garrett



Our First Annual Community Awards Ceremony: Thurman Barker loads up his gear after his performance with students before the ceremony on Wednesday. Leon and Stu await the proceedings. Before the awards were given out, Botstein had this to say about the significance of the ceremony: "It has, if you will, an ancient Greek quality. Getting an award in private is like singing in the shower."

Bard Students Return from D.C. Court

On May 17 and 18, four Bard students joined 20 others and stood trial in D.C. on charges of jumping over police barricades during a rally to abolish the death penalty and get a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal. The four students—Rowena Epstein-Kennedy, Susie David, Raphie Gottesman, Andy Ryder—plead guilty and were sentenced to a total of \$100 in fines. Under the Youth Act, the students will have the charges expunged from their records.

The defendants had a number of choices for their plea. The prosecution was offering "diversion" in which defendants agree to do 40 hours of community service in order to have their charges dropped. However, the defendants decided against that decision because the agreement included a "snitch clause" whereby defendants would waive their Fifth Amendment right not to incriminate themselves in court. Defendants were worried that people would implicate others as chief organizers.

Although none of the Bard students chose to, half the defendants chose to plead not guilty. They viewed the police barricades unconstitutional, as they were placed on the supreme court steps in order to hinder protest. Furthermore, they were never warned or told they were breaking the law, and will argue in court that they hopped over bicycle racks rather than police barricades. The trial for people pleading not guilty will be in June.

The men and the women who plead guilty were tried separately. After arriving in court, the defendants waited for hours in the court room while awaiting their trial. Raphie, as well as some of the other Bard students who went to trial earlier in the year, spoke of seeing a stream of young black males sentenced to jail time on drug charges. They found the experience reaffirming, seeing that the system

clearly targets people of color and the poor.

In court, Raphie spoke of a similar sentiment in a speech he gave to the judge before sentencing: "I think everything that happens today is a triviality in the face of such grave injustices as the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal and other political prisoners. We are acting in an effort to abolish the racist death-penalty."

In the end, Susie and Rowena were tried last Wednesday, May 17 and were sentenced to pay \$50 to a D.C. "victim's fund." Raphie and Andy went to court the following day and had their fines waived. One more Bard student, who plead not guilty earlier this year, will go to trial in September.

Mumia Abu-Jamal was found guilty of killing police officer Daniel Faulkner and sentenced to death 1981. Mumia supporters point to many different aspects of the trial as the reason for a new trial. They argued that the evidence was skewed.

Since the trial, police have admitted to changing the caliber of the bullet in the coroner's report. The original report listed a caliber bullet that doesn't match Mumia's gun. Many witnesses have said that they were pressured and threatened into falsely identifying Mumia as the killer and not giving their account of a killer other than Mumia.

Supporters also point to the lack of competence of the lawyer that Mumia was assigned. Mumia was not allowed to defend himself and his lawyer has admitted to being asleep and high on cocaine during the trial. Furthermore, his lawyer never interviewed a single witness and told the judge he was not capable of going to trial.

Supporters argue that if Mumia had a competent lawyer, police misconduct would have been uncovered. Forensics and medical experts would have

been sought out and testified on Mumia's behalf. Many experts say that the witnesses testifying against Mumia give an unbelievable story. Witnesses argue that Mumia shot Faulkner from below, however medical experts point out that that story is impossible because of the trajectory of the bullet inside officer Faulkner's body. Similarly, forensic experts question the cops legitimacy because they never performed two standard tests: smelling the weapon to see if it was recently fired and wiping Mumia's hand to determine if there was dust from the blast of the gun.

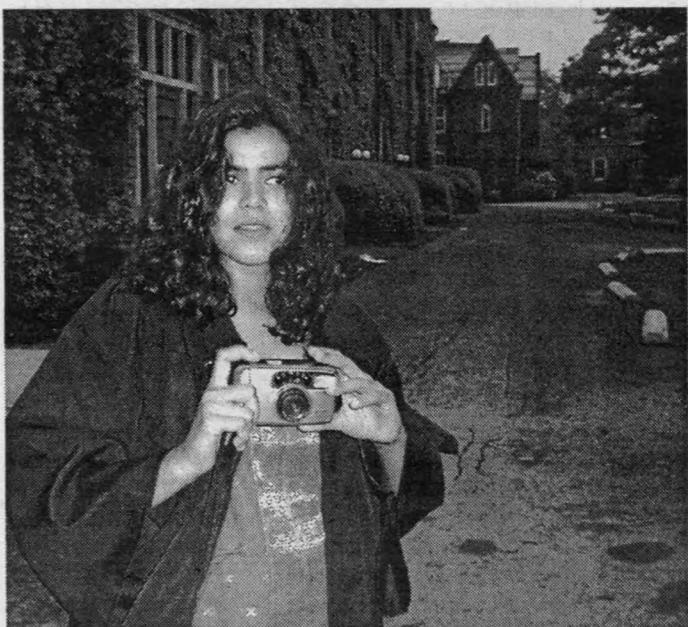
Many anti-death penalty advocates and Mumia supporters see Mumia's case of a single instance in a broader problem of discrimination. People of color and poor people are more likely to get the death penalty than white people and rich people who commit similar crimes. Furthermore, they argue that poor people do not get adequate representation since their lawyers are under-experienced, underpaid, and under funded.

Other people oppose the death penalty because they oppose the state killing people. They hold that life is sacred and that the government should not be in a position to kill people.

The Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) firmly holds that Mumia Abu Jamal is a cop-killer. They point to the fact that Mumia was found guilty in a court of law as evidence that he is guilty of killing Daniel Faulkner. They also point to Mumia's political beliefs and former membership of the Black Panthers as evidence of his crime. The FOP argues that killing Mumia will give Faulkner's wife much needed closure to the events and send a message to people around the U.S. that people who kill cops will be killed by the government.

—Michael Chamelides

• STAFF PIC # 5 •



Is that a digital camera?: The Observer bids farewell to Bhakti Shringapure, the greatest Arts & Entertainment Editor ever. Goodbye, Bhakti!

Students Look Towards New Semester, New Leadership

by **John Garrett**

As the spring semester finally comes to a close, many are left wondering what is in store for Bard College. Going through what the Planning Committee chair Max Kenner stated is a "transition period," there have been many changes initiated this year at Bard which can send Bard in any of several different directions. It is exactly this state of transition that prompted student government to begin their crusade.

From the opening of the Bertlesman Campus Center, to the use of emergency-relief trailer homes as housing, to the announcement that Bard will be part of a joint science program with the Rockefeller University, the changes span many facets of the college's operation—from student social life to the college's academic development.

"Through the first semester and at the beginning of the second semester, it seemed as if students were not aware of how to get in touch with the student government, let alone what the student government could actually do," Kenner said. "There were

all of these changes happening, and students, particularly first and second years, just assumed that they had no voice."

In order to get students involved, the student government went to work. Said Kenner, "There were many concerns, and those concerns needed to be addressed." To launch their crusade, the Central Committee began meeting with Bard administrators, while at the same time hosting forums to inform students. Several Central Committee members expressed

some unease about the possibility of a lack of participation by the student body, but once information started to get out around campus, the unease quickly subsided.

"Over the course of the semester, students went from being passive to being progressively more involved," stated Central Committee member Brianna Norton. "There was a revival of sorts within student government and students finally began to realize the influence they could have."

Concern amongst the student population, particularly

those of the upper classes, is about general trends in school growth. Increasing student population, changes in departmental policy, loss of student-run living and social space, and the lack of comfortable housing and studio space are specific issues that have been brought to the administration this semester.

Through a variety of petitions and actions taken primarily by the Central Committee, students have been able to influence many campus-wide changes. Tewksbury's lounge space has been promised to be returned as social space, there

will forever be a twenty-four hour study space, the Educational Policies Committee (EPC) will be given more insight and information from the administration, and Albee is now being considered as remaining a dorm.

But, despite these victories, the student government electees for next year have a lot of work ahead of them. There are still ways the administration is looking to bypass the student voice. Kenner noted alumni awards for students that student government was intended to have had influence in, but was never consulted for, as well as President Botstein's suggestion that the discussion on Albee may be shorter than the students wish.

However, Norton stated relief that there was "an incredible amount of competition in the elections for this year, more than any other year I have been at Bard." Hopefully, the leadership provided by the Central Committee [Max Kenner, Katherine Gulley, Elizabeth Murphy, Malini Ranganathan, Emeron Ahmed and Cynthia Conti-Cook] will be enough to keep the student government as active as possible.

"Over the course of the semester, students went from being passive to being progressively more involved. There was a revival of sorts within student government and students finally began to realize the influence they could have."

• INTERNATIONAL BRIEFING by Abhik Siddiqui •

Fighting Escalates in Conflict over Israeli Villages

The tension between Israel and Palestine reached a crisis point with the recent spate of violence between the Palestinian demonstrators and Israeli troops.

Palestinians in large numbers poured onto the streets last week, protesting against the futility of the peace talks and demanding the release of Palestinian prisoners locked in Israel jails. The unequal battle between the army and the civilians resulted in major casualties.

While the violent clashes between the army and the protestors continued, in a separate, but parallel development, the Israelis troops and Palestinian forces exchanged gunfire on each other. The recent explosion of violence has completely derailed prospects of long term solution to the peace-process.

Frustrated and demoralized by the lack of progress, the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat refused to intervene in the present crises. In a gesture to improve relations, the Israeli Prime Minister Edun Barak announced that he would give Palestinians full control over three villages near Jerusalem.

However, his gesture was not well received by the Palestinian authorities, who were not enthused by the prospect of getting three small villages over which they had only partial control. The right-wing groups—part of Edun Barak's coalition—in Israel seized on the volatile situation and demanded the suspension of peace-talks if the government proceeded to cede parts

of the West Bank to the Palestinian authorities.

The hands of the Israeli Prime Minister seem tied with the conservative parties of his coalition putting pressure on him to adopt a more confrontational stance towards Palestine. Mr. Edun Barak failed to get a forthright and irrevocable commitment from the conservative Shas party to support him throughout the peace process.

The National Religious Party, his most hard-line coalition partner announced that it would walk away from the coalition if Abu Dis, a suburb outside Jerusalem, came under full Palestinian control. The Palestinians, for their part, have been lukewarm to the recent attempts made by Mr. Edun Barak.

A meeting between Mr. Barak and Mr. Arafat in Ramallah on May 7 failed to arrive at a solution to the escalating crises. The Palestinians ignored a proposal submitted by the Israelis that showed a withdrawal from 65 percent of the West Bank. The Palestinians demanded a complete withdrawal of Israel from the West Bank.

The recent explosion of violence has turned the spotlight away from the corridors of power to the perception of the people and their involvement in the peace process. The growing alienation of the people from the peace-process was evident in the recent explosion of violence that called into question the very legitimacy of the peace-process.

Commencement Speaker Announced, Senior Class Largest Ever

At this year's commencement ceremony, President Leon Botstein will distribute the largest number of undergraduate degrees in the history of Bard College. This year's class, composed of 274 graduates, will receive their diplomas on Saturday, May 27 at Bard's 140th commencement. The commencement program will begin at 2:30 and will be held on Bard's main lawn. The ceremony will include the distribution of diplomas, the bestowing of honorary doctorates, a reception for the class of 2000 and their guests, and a barbecue and dance for all in attendance.

Dr. Arnold J. Levine, a renowned biochemist and president of Rockefeller University in New York City, will give the commencement address and receive an honorary Doctor of Science degree. Dr. Levine is best known for his work on the role of genetics in cancer formation. His research focuses on the tumor suppressor gene called p53 and on its protein product, which he discovered in 1979. The tumor suppressor p53 is now studied in laboratories around the world and is helping to develop a new generation of cancer therapies. Outside of Rockefeller University, Dr. Levine is strengthening the University's already

close ties with neighboring medical and cancer centers. He also serves on several leadership committees, which work to improve the regional economy by bringing biotechnology-related business to New York City. Dr. Levine also helped shape United States science priorities as chairman of an influential 1996 review panel on federal AIDS research funding.

During the commencement week-end other events will be taking place. These will include class reunions; a concert of works composed by Bard student soloists and composers with the American Symphony Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Leon Botstein; and the granting of Bard College Awards for the year 2000. In addition, honorary degrees will be awarded to former U.S. Attorney General Nicholas deB. Katzenbach; architect Maya Lin, who designed the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.; jazz musician, historian, and educator Billy Taylor; economist and former Federal Reserve Board Governor Janet L. Yellin; and the first female rector of the State University of St. Petersburg in Russia, Ludmila A. Verbitskaya.

—Melissa Stultz

Vermont continued . . .

20, 1999, the Vermont Supreme Court officially ruled that it was unconstitutional to deny marriage licenses to same-sex couples in that state. It ordered the State Legislature to craft a solution. This was less than two weeks after the Hawaii Supreme Court dropped a case there that could have legalized same-sex marriage. The Vermont House Judiciary Committee began hearings on the issue in early January.

The cause has been led by the Vermont Freedom to Marry Action Committee. The group hired a team

of lobbyists to try to sway members of the Legislature to support same-sex marriage. They feel that the April 25 decision to legalize "civil unions" between people of the same gender in Vermont was a major victory for gay rights, but realize that there are still 49 more states to go.

Anti-gay religious and political groups have been highly critical of the bill, claiming that it infringes upon the "sacred institution of marriage."

—Matt Dineen

Do you like to listen to music? Do you like to eat free food? Do you like to stay up all night? Then the *Observer* is for you! Give us a call at X7131 or drop an email to observer@bard.edu to find out how you too can enjoy these luxuries that we can no longer live without.

25 Years with Botstein

Our President sat down with the Observer to talk about where Bard's been, where it's at, and where it's going.

by Michael Haggerty

Stephanie Rabins

Observer: You've been here for 25 years now. Did you ever think you would be at Bard for this long?

Botstein: I didn't think about it. I never have thought in a long-term way. One doesn't take life for granted. One thinks about ones ambitions in terms of the work one wants to do.

You think in five, ten, fifteen year intervals in terms of books you want to write, or recordings you want make, or performances you want to give. But in terms of work where a lot is dependent upon your relationships with other people, it's not your own work. You're not in control of all the variables. It's very presumptuous to think in a very long term way. You take things in sequence, as they come.

Observer: You do a lot of different types of work. You're a conductor, a college administrator, and a writer. Do you feel like all of these things are interrelated in any way, or do you see them as separate parts of your life?

Botstein: They're entirely interrelated. The work that I do as a musician and as a scholar are crucial to being a college president, which is about encouraging students to aspire to make work, to write, to be artists or scholars. It's very hard to administer something if you don't do it yourself. I wouldn't want to be a patient in a hospital where the person running it wasn't herself or himself a functioning physician.

It seems to me that a university or a college needs to have as its chief administrator someone who represents the values that you're trying to engender in an institution. Having as an administrator someone who did it a long time ago, who doesn't do it anymore, puts that person out of touch with the aspirations of young people.

Observer: When you came to Bard, what kind of goals did you set for the values you wanted to instill in the college? What kind of problems were there with Bard that needed to be immediately addressed?

Botstein: The reason I came to Bard was that Bard seemed to me one of the few places where there was a possibility of sustaining a real idealism about learning and about teaching. It was a place where it could be done unconventionally and where the connection of the arts to the other disciplines could be fostered.

It seemed to me a place with a tremendous heritage of a commitment to the individual student and to the love of learning—a place with an enormously honest tradition and fantastic potential.

The major problems 25 years ago

were that the college had always been very small, had no endowment, and was very poor. Bard had been an independent institution since the late '40s and it had a lot of institutional and financial challenges facing it. My predecessor, Reamer Kline, had been here for 14 years. He had a harder job. When he came in 1960 the place was truly in dire straits and I had the benefit of picking up where he left off.

Observer: Currently, there is a feeling on campus that in Admissions there is a move to attract a different type of student to Bard than in the past.

Botstein: Well, I think this is simply a suspicion that has been around for 25 years.

Bard seemed to me one of the few places where there was a possibility of sustaining a real idealism about learning and about teaching. . . A place with an enormously honest tradition and fantastic potential.

This is not a new sentiment. Every senior class, every current student body has held the next generation in some sort of suspicion. This is a Bard tradition: to worry about the fact that somebody is changing the Admissions process.

The truth of the matter is that Admissions is not controlled by the institution. It's controlled by the young people who apply. Every institution attracts, historically, a pretty coherent student interest. And the college, in the last 25 years has strengthened its position in the arts. It has risen in the estimation of the generation who is coming into college, in terms of its academic reputation, if you will. And therefore it has become more popular.

In 1975, when I came, there were 4 applicants for every place available. There are now 10 applicants for every place. That has made it more competitive, but the competition doesn't involve a change in the student body. In fact, if you look at the senior projects this year, it is amazing how much consistency there is with the kind of projects students have made at Bard over the past 25 years.

What has changed is that in 1975, about 30 percent of the entering class didn't graduate. So that's a change. And it is harder to get in to, but the people who are

getting in and coming are very much the same kind of young person, with the same set of ambitions.

There is always some change in the culture of young people, though that has to do not at all with Bard but with the fact that the political perspective of every entering class is different. A student entering next year, let's say, is aged 18 and was born in 1982. Their major memory as a young child may be the end of the cold war. That's very different from a student who entered in 1975, who was born in 1967, whose first memory may have been Watergate. So we have to accept that there will be inevitable change that has nothing to do with Bard.

For example, students were very angry when we moved students out of Blithewood and built new dormitories [the Toasters] closer to main campus. We were accused of centralizing, bringing students too close to main campus. If you have a historical perspective on it, you realize that the complaint is understandable, but it's not in response to a real conspiracy to do something "wrong."

What is happening is that the college and the faculty has grown in size. There has to be a close contact between where faculty teach and where students go to study. Office space has to be in a reasonable proximity to classrooms. The college is short on classrooms; the college is expanding its science program; the college isn't rich. So just look at the geometry: where are you going to put new classrooms and a science building?

Albee has to be renovated, one way or the other. The age of the building and new requirements—in terms of fire safety, access, all those things—make the renovation difficult. You can grandfather a building, but once you make it a residence hall the requirements go up. It's much less expensive and much more convenient—in the best sense, not the negative sense—for students to have classrooms and offices in Albee if we have to expand classrooms and teaching space. It's near the computer center, it's near the library, it's near the warden's hall offices, it's near Hegeman. When you put all that together, there are very limited choices. Will the college in the long term build new dormitories on the upper campus? Probably yes.

I would say that the concern for Albee is understandable, but some of it is based on the misapprehension of a lack of concern for students' well-being. But it also reflects an instinctive conservatism by which student bodies understandably get very attached to the college as they know it. It's interesting—the alumnae are very enthusiastic about the renovation of Albee into classrooms. They helped us as they did with the warden's hall, even though they lived there. As they graduated the college they had a desire for the college to grow and change.

When I go back to my own alma mater, I don't think, "Well, they made a mistake by turning where I used to live into classrooms." I was very attached to the music building at the University of Chicago—very attached. They tore it down! They built a new music building and I thought that was great. Although many formative moments of my life took place in that ramshackle building which we

. . . continued top of next page

thought was very intimate and put us very close together, the music department is a much better and much more effective place now than it was when I was an undergraduate.

Observer: It seems like the issue of Albee has come to represent the larger issue that Bard is losing a distinct feeling of community—where people are interacting on main campus, coming into contact with each other, and living where they study.

Botstein: Well, I think that's wrong. I say that from many years of experience. I think that's a wrong assessment. Now it's easy for me to say that's a wrong assessment, but that's what they say and therefore they feel it. But remember the student government is a very peculiar one here. It's a creature of something that happened in the late '70s—it's not a conventional student government. Most student governments are represented by dormitories and by classes. It's a student government that legitimately wants to assert itself, as it should.

These issues are both symbolic and real. You know about the symbolism, but the real issue is not Albee. The transformation of Albee into a teaching space will benefit students. It's not against students. And where students live—there's been a change of taste over the years. Some people want to be further away; some people once recommended we put the dorms in remote areas; some people have favored centralizing it. There's not a consistency in points of view over the years. Students' tastes change.

On the question of community. . . Students for years begged us to build a campus center. Then you have a new generation that says, "Well, we don't like the Campus Center. We like the Old Gym." There will be a generation of students five years from now for whom the absence of the student center would be unthinkable.

What really hasn't changed with the student position is that there shouldn't be decentralized dining. I'm opposed to that, some of my colleagues are in favor of that, but I actually believe that centralized dining is a way of creating community. But when Kline Commons was built—people used to eat in Preston—people were against Kline Commons. People are resistant to changes in this way.

The most important aspect of community is the increased size of the college—which hasn't really changed in the last couple years, so I'm surprised that this comes up now. I would have understood if the college had grown from 700 students to 1,200 students in three years—then there would be a change.

In my view, the two most important factors for the perception of a "declining" community—which I don't see, but it's easy for me to say I don't share it—is the growth of Tivoli as a destination point and the increased use of computers.

In the old days, people complained that there was no place to go, and there was in fact a time when students approached us to build dormitories in Tivoli in order to create Tivoli as a sort of town for the college. So, we have to deal with shifting student opinion.

The other factor—and it's all through American academic life—is the Internet, the computer, and the amount of time people spend alone, in their rooms, communicating by email, not in person, not by telephone. And this is a phenomenon throughout American higher education. You may not think it's very strong, but a lot of people spend a lot of time by themselves using a machine. I think it's a wonderful thing, but it's a different way in which students have chosen to spend their time.

And I don't think the complaints are as broadly based as the student government makes it out to be. The student body

does not think, thank god, in one way—there are many people with different views. And Bard has always been a place of small communities—around film, around theater, around photography. That has always put, to some extent, a general student government at a disadvantage, because there are so many small units of communities, usually around interests that students have. I don't think that has changed; in fact, it has grown dramatically.

The complaints have to be taken seriously, because they reflect things we have to do. But when we respond—which we will—to student concerns, we have to be prepared for the next generation of students who might not like what we did because they have a different concern.

The other thing—about the EPC, tenure, and evaluations and—there, I think, is a tremendous amount of misinfor-

able system and it puts a tremendously difficult burden on us to make a decision to give someone a job for life. Especially if the primary emphasis of the job is how good a teacher the individual is. There is no one who's come up for tenure for whom there has not been student support, even in the case I just mentioned.

We hire very good people and nobody comes to the tenure line without a substantial amount of student support—they wouldn't get that far. The decision of tenure is not whether the person is a good teacher now. The question is will that person be a good teacher, what's the prediction?

Observer: That can also change, over the course of time. . .

Botstein: Yes. This is at best an informed guess. It's a judgement about whether

The complaints have to be taken seriously, because they reflect things we have to do. But when we respond—which we will—to student concerns, we have to be prepared for the next generation of students who might not like what we did because they have a different concern.

Stephanie Rabins



Chatting inside Botman's cave: While expressing a concern for student issues, President Botstein was quick to point out that small things that appear to be "harbingers of change" become less significant when one looks at the larger picture

mation around the issue. The majority of the pieces of paper in the tenure and review files are student evaluations. There was a case, two years ago, when the faculty recommended somebody for tenure and the EPC did not. We denied the person tenure. One of the reasons was the EPC recommendation. There's a recent history where someone actually lost a job as a result of the formal EPC recommendation. If you have a historical view, the complaint that we don't listen to student input is actually incorrect.

Observer: In general, though, what do you think of tenure? Do you feel like it's an outmoded academic institution?

Botstein: I am not a fan of the tenure system. I think that tenure is an unreason-

someone 25 years from now will still be a good teacher. That's a decision we have to make and that's a very tough decision. Students will come to me and say, "Well, the person up for tenure is a better teacher than so and so who's a senior faculty member, who's been here for x numbers of years." And my response to that person is, "But x numbers years ago, that person came up for tenure and the students said, 'This person is the best teacher I've had.'" The question is how do you judge the trajectory of an individual's potential as a teacher from when they're young and relatively new at the job, and how they will be over many, many years to come. And that's a very unreasonable decision.

Observer: Some students have said that the tenure and re-hire system hasn't, in the past few years, been very conducive to creating a diverse faculty in terms of women and people of color.

Botstein: That's statistically untrue—simply not true. And I would suggest that if you want to test that proposition, just look at the numbers. There's been a steady increase in the diversity of people of color. It's the easiest accusation to make and it is also the easiest accusation to confront with facts. I suggest you go to the Dean and simply look at the record.

Not everything that people allege is true, and I am responsible to tell the truth. Therefore, if I say it isn't true, I have to be right or else I'm not fulfilling my responsibility. Compare the number of minority and women faculty from 1975 to the year 2000—look at the 25 year record.

Observer: One last question . . . Where do you see yourself and Bard in say, five years, since that's the time frame you think in?

Botstein: The older one gets, the more modest one becomes in terms of looking into the future. I would say that the most important thing that needs to be remembered is that institutional characters are much stronger than the characters of individuals. My work as president has been to continue and strengthen a Bard that existed before I arrived, and my obligation is to continue to do that into the future. And that means expanding the resources for students.

We will be building the performing arts center which will greatly improve the facilities for students of drama, theater, and dance, and will also provide a larger auditorium for other events in the college. We will improve the science facilities on campus. We will renovate and enlarge the film and music facilities, so when the theater and dance departments move into the new building, that building will be turned over to film, video, and music. The college will build new dormitories and will eventually renovate the older dormitories. We have to prepare for the eventuality that more students will want to live on campus, so we will probably be in the business of thinking about more dormitory and faculty housing on campus. Some of that will take place on the upper campus.

I think that you can't work in a place for 25 years without developing a deep affection for the spirit of the place. And there is, in the end of the day, a tremendous amount of personal commitment, but also a deep sense of continuity. Small things seem very significant, they seem to be harbingers of change. But when you step away, there's a continuity. You look very carefully at, for example, cloth, and what seems to be a continuous piece turns out to be a jumble of very different asymmetrical strands. Was the spirit of Bard appreciably changed by, for example, turning the warden's hall into faculty offices? The answer is no.

What holds the place consistently to its own purposes is the quality of faculty and the quality of students. We have here today more fantastic teachers, scholars, writers, artists, musicians, poets, and researchers than the college has ever had in its history. And it is those individuals and the students whom they attract and keep that sustain the long time spirit of Bard.

Illuminating the Elemental

The Chapel of the Holy Innocents losses its innocence

by **Brian Ackley**

ON WEDNESDAY NIGHT the Chapel of Holy Innocents was transformed by images referencing loss, sex, transformation, illness and death. Senior Sameer Reddy's ambitious integrated arts show "Elemental" is an installation that attempts to raise questions of AIDS and gay identity through video, photographs, and sculptural installation. The themes and media of the show are all tied together through the use of elemental imagery including earth, fire, water and wind.

The installation is composed of four 'moments'—four areas that unfold over time—two of which are processions utilizing the momentum of text leading to videos and two which are rooms that hold a central attraction. The first procession begins immediately in front of the entrance to the chapel. There are three rectangular boxes flanked by candles. The small, solemn boxes are filled with dirt and contain words spelled out in pebbles forming the phrase: "I'M SORRY THAT" "I GAVE YOU" "THE WRONG IMPRESSION."

Scanning over these boxes leads the viewer up to a pornographic video projected on a red screen (a choice that integrates beautifully with the feel of the space by establishing continuity with the red carpeting of the chapel). The video is found footage that has been manipulated; the loop is a slow motion negative image that graphically depicts two men having 'bare-back' (unprotected) sex. Through the manipulation and context, a run of the mill porno becomes more raw and extremely eerie. The actors' relationship is ambiguous as are their actions; it is impossible to tell if their expressions show pleasure or pain. The "wrong impression" seems to involve the nature of this sexual encounter, of the assumptions of their relationship or perhaps their disreputing the

use of condoms.

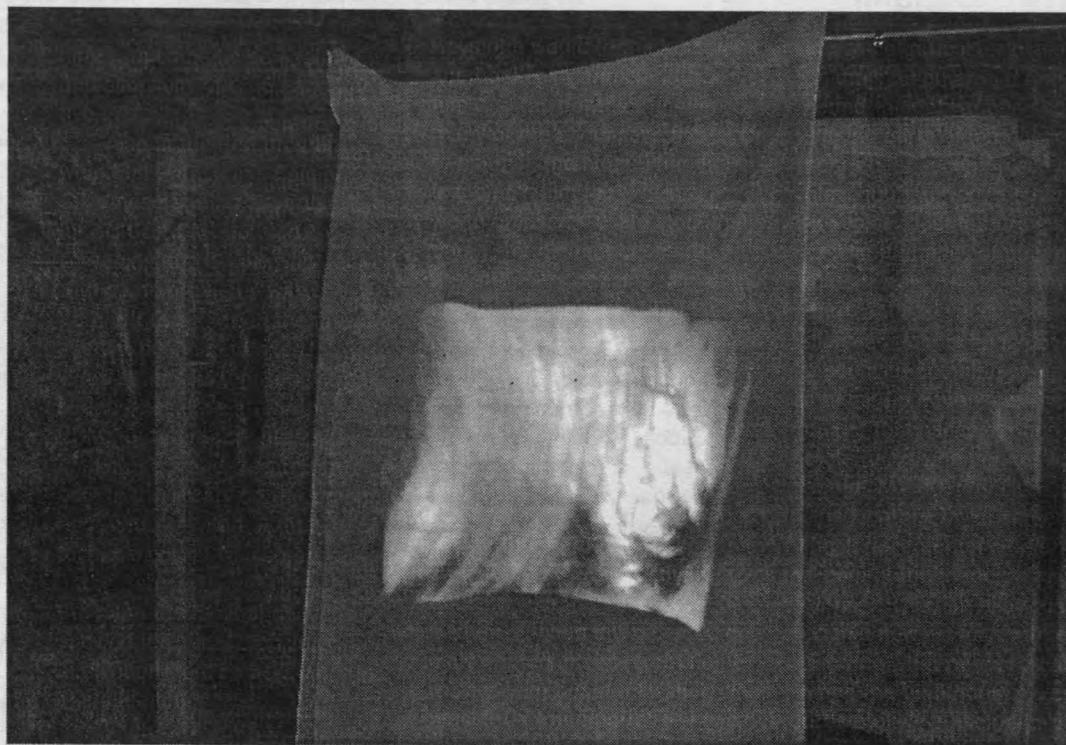
As you turn toward the apse of the chapel, the second procession engages the viewer. On the floor, also lit by candles, are 5x7 photo prints of the sentence, "BUT WHAT MADE YOU THINK THAT IT WOULD ALL WORK OUT." The text is made from salt photographed on the floor. As the series of images progresses the salt is blown away and the words are obscured. The destination of these images is a video of candles arranged to spell out "YOU KNOW, THERE IS NO REFUGE WHEN DARKNESS COMES." The candles hypnotically flicker and slowly burn out until there are only a few sparks desperately glowing. The metaphor of wind blowing and flames burning out is coupled with the doubt and the pessimism of the phrases. The interaction of these two 'text performances' reiterates the anxiety and the eventual consequence of the previous section of the installation.

The final two moments of Reddy's show are presented in the cavernous basement of the chapel. In the first room, at the bottom of the steps, a video is projected onto a translucent piece of fabric draped from the ceiling. The video is of a wooden bird cage with a small green object inside. In a jerky stop-motion animation the cage silently spins as a wrapping of bandages accumulates around it. The video abruptly cuts to a shot of the cage in flames surrounded by darkness, the camera pulls in and out examining the incineration of the cage. In front of the projection there is a small table where the object that was inside the cage, apparently a small figure of Buddha, now lies burnt and broken. The bandages are a direct reference to medical treatment

but also to the attempt at protecting a sense of serenity, of the refuge implied by the isolated Buddha

In the final room behind the video of the bird cage, there is a tailor's mannequin that is old and soiled; trails of sequins are visible across its surface. Inside the body of the mannequin hangs an intravenous drip bag with its plastic tube trailing down to the floor. A bowl of

does not deal with. One is the interference of the equipment: the projectors are sitting out on tables, the television and VCR are clearly in view, as is the flashlight under the water. They all unnecessarily call attention to themselves; the power cords block passage, creating an awkward and distracting situation. For the work to have its full impact and integrate with the



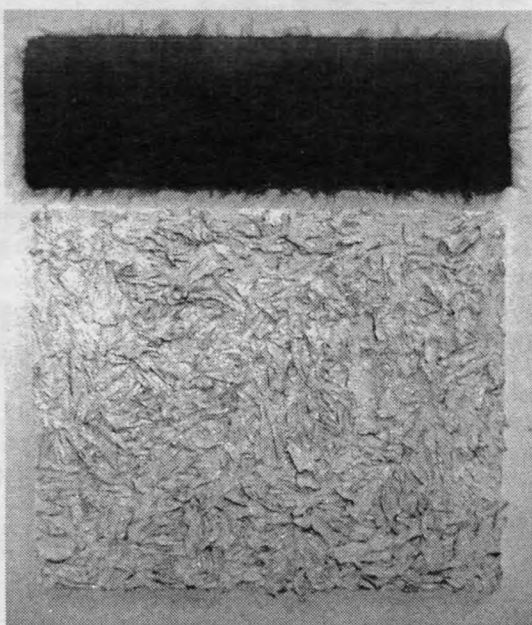
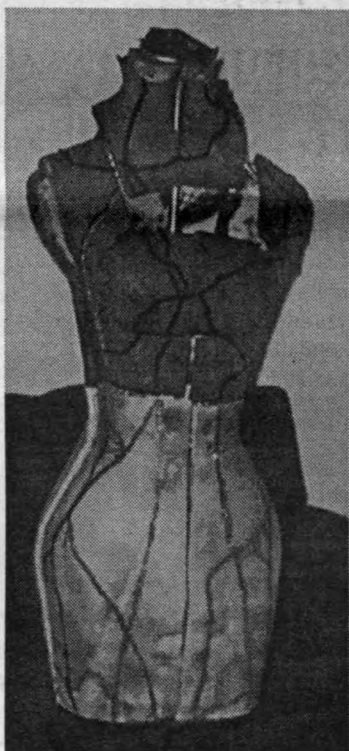
Elements of installation: In the first basement room of the chapel there is a video of a burning bird cage (above) while the back room houses a semi-sequined mannequin (below).

Through the manipulation and context, a run of the mill porno becomes more raw and extremely eerie.

dirty yellow water sits beneath, glowing from light placed under it. The drip bag relates to the Buddha figure from the previous room but in this case the object of devotion is a medical apparatus housed in a less-than-glamorous symbol of gay culture.

Unfortunately, the issues that Reddy is addressing are at times lost due to some small problems that the installation

space, these elements should be invisible. Overall though, the beauty of the videos—so visceral and rich—and the powerful force of elemental metaphors emerge as dominant in this examination of gay identity, AIDS, and the tenuous relationship between life and death in illness.



Mikhail Bortnik's "Trashed Culture"

The work in Mikhail Bortnik's senior show, currently on display in Fisher, presents several themes that he has pursued all dealing with issues of popular culture. From the 'all-over' minimal compositions made from everyday objects, such as "Ohh La La" (left) which is made from rubber gloves and a cushion, to his paintings of carnies, Bortnik elevates items of low or seemingly insignificant culture to the expressive status of art. "Just Blow Em Out" (right) incorporates cutout magazine images in a not-so-happy birthday scene that literally asks "WHY RIOT?".



• FILE UNDER: SENIOR SHOWS •

Senior Filmmakers Reclaim Olde Gym

Cinema returns to the the gym's big screen for screening of the senior program

by David Janik

THE BARD PEOPLE'S Film Department took back the Old Gym as movie theatre for a night for the first in the series of Senior Project Film Screenings Friday May 19. The graduating Film students had spent Friday and Sunday nights of First and Sophomore years drinking beer, yelling, smoking, and watching Film Committee movies with barely passable sound in the Old Gym and wanted their final work at the college to be screened in that same raucous atmosphere.

And it certainly was a raucous night with two kegs of beer, couches and chairs filling the immense gymnasium and a five plus hour program of films as varied and entertaining as anyone could ask them to be. The night ran smoothly barring a few technical difficulties and all the Film Majors seemed to be in the best of spirits with a success on their hands.

The program began with the first episode of Lou Thomas' *The Adventures of Steven Parks*, *Man of the World* serial, "Hangover." The series, which was spread out between other students' films across the duration of the evening, stars Peter Knight as the title character, a man who personifies the moments in everyday life when perception is as important as action. The "Hangover" showed Steven falling out of bed, throwing a clock radio on the floor, vomiting, making faces in the mirror, peeing for an extraordinarily long time, and just missing a phone call. Other episodes showed Steven sitting on a porch, professing the greatness of the tri-pod, listening to a record, and dreaming about rockstars and girlfriends. The episodic adventures were a crowd pleaser, stuning

with comedic perspective and simplicity of vision and narrative.

Also in the first program were Eli Levenstein's *Epic of Gilgamesh* and an advertisement for his CD-ROM, *Untitled 1.0*. The screening of the *Epic* was delayed with some problems with the VCR, but this allowed the crowd to see the hilarious images from video games juxtaposed with sound bites. Eli's ad for the CD-ROM, featured a frightening image of a squid, which is available in the library on the second floor iMacs, hinted at the use of technology that was so prevalent in the Seniors' work. Throughout the night the films and videos showed technical proficiency and innovation from camera work to digital editing.

There was Nathan Corbin's otherworldly video manipulations of Albany's architecture with its amazing soundtrack and riotous credit sequence featuring Stephen Rhodes dancing in the middle of completely white space. Nathan's video played with the creation of a "New Babylon," and Stephen's character was both guide to the attractions of this peculiar place and one of its strange inhabitants. Nathan turned Albany's already bizarre landscape into a futuristic sci-fi set using the capacities of the DV camera and AVID editing program.

There was the beautiful color cinematography of Max Rubinstein and Eli Joseph-Hunter. Max's film made the viewer see a house in both familiar ways and

ways one would think not look. The bold color and clarity of the film and the depth of field in many of the shots gave a feeling of being in the house, and knowing it. Eli's film took us into a world of insects using stop animation. Eli had centipedes and grasshoppers dancing across the elaborate dim sets. *The Insect Resurrection* was documented in precise cinematography that raised consideration of scale, motion and focus.

Gretchen Hogue and Shannon Insana lighted up the screen with the intense vibrance of their handprocessed film. Both seemed to have a tactile relationship with the film; frame by frame Gretchen interspersed optically printed images from home movies with beautifully shot, clear black and white portraits of two women's bodies. The film was a

images of a pairs of objects and animals together and featured a soundtrack of various people singing parts of famous love songs. Her second piece was a filmic journal from a summer on the west coast featuring some excellent images of ping pong matches and the ocean. The third, entitled *Facts* paired the dialectic double image of bird and plane with people reciting and making up equations. The last paired fast-paced car and motorcycle races with aphoristic text about "MY BOYFRIEND."

Heather Taylor screened her mock documentary, *Celebrity Profile* of the made up artist "Janos." The film hilariously created this new art icon with out showing what he looked like, by using the testimony of aspiring artists playing aspiring artists. It was a tactfully done commentary

er by an ongoing voice over narrative and beautiful music soundtrack.

Michael Ginsburg's video continued the evening's theme of digital technology as a means of working. He set images of desolate sections of Queens in precise synch with an original soundtrack. The video built to a rapid rhythmic whirl of signs, stadiums and roads.

G.J. Echternkamp's film looked to be the most professional narrative-style film of the evening featuring color cinematography by Chris Dapkins and hilarious performances by Luis Moreno, David Snyder and Vic Kaufold. The main star was G. J. himself as a man being trained to become a part of the real world. The film was filled with funny moments and unusual turns of

And it certainly was a raucous night with two kegs of beer, couches and chairs filling the immense gymnasium and a five plus hour program of films as varied and entertaining as anyone could ask them to be.

remarkably honest, open self portrait.

Shannon's series of four shorts used the methods of experimental films but injected a fresh sense of humor, making them neither boring nor self absorbed which is much needed in the genre. Shannon's first film showed eerie hand-processed

on the structure of fasion, art and media.

Laura Schadler's Silent Film was a pseudo-narrative montage film starring Amanda Phillips as a woman working through her real and imagined lovers. The film featured color and black and white film of the couples in pastoral and intimate settings tied together

plot.

The film show was certainly a success and everyone still has a number of chances to see the films if they missed the Old Gym's resurrection as a movie house. The films play this Monday, Wednesday, and Friday in Preston and the Stupid Center Theatre.

• FILM REVIEW •

Close-Up on Iranian Cinema

Abbas Kiarostami is among a few dozen Iranian film makers who were active prior to and continued working after the 1978-79 revolution. His films strongly inherit old eastern traditions, social and artistic, yet also succeed to capture all of us by those child-like innocent qualities that often seem so complex. Kiarostami's cinema investigates life as an aesthetic text; it wonders about instinctual connection to reality, and always celebrates individual liberties.

Abbas Kiarostami's *Close-Up* (1990) is based on a true story of a man pretending to be a famous film maker, Mohsen Makhmalbaf, who fools the members of a family. Initially, he is revealed to be just a harmless film fan. At first, the film stylistically appears to be an off-shoot of Italian neo-realism or French Cinema Verite. Yet, as it unfolds, *Close-Up* abandons such confines and allows itself to be more approachable. The protagonist, Hossain Sabzian is an unemployed romantic movie lover who lost his family due to his financial conditions. In order to gain the respect and power of which his social status deprived him, Sabzian becomes an actor in real life, and plays an important Iranian director, one just like Kiarostami. By lying, Sabzian befriends an upper middle class family and promises them to make a film in their house. The friendship and respect from the family members is precisely the ultimate satisfaction of Sabzian's desires. However, his escapism

does not last for long. Sabzian's real identity is revealed and the family has him arrested. Kiarostami exposes the complete plot of the story in the opening sequence and proceeds with the trial in court where an act of forgiveness takes place.

Mohsen Makhmalbaf and Hossain Sabzian appear as themselves in the film. It is the fusion of factual reality and the manufactured one that adds a magnetic quality to the film. Neither factual or fictitious elements can carry the significance on their own in *Close-Up*. The concept of a true fact is not what holds the film together, but an infinite human desire present in the mixture of true and false. In the finale of the film, the real Makhmalbaf meets Sabzian as he is released from the prison and they ride around the city on a motorcycle with long pink flowers. During this long take, as they drive through the busy streets, the spectator loses the understanding of which one of the men is the real Makhmalbaf. The only image that stands out is the irrelevant pink flower. The truth, or the fact, no longer encapsulates any type significance.

Kiarostami depicts a close-up of man that lies to a family. He is caught. He apologizes. The family forgives the man. In order to demonstrate his appreciation for their forgiveness, the man brings the family pink flowers, and perhaps, everyone lives happily ever after. The utter simplicity of this story and the freshness of the raw camera initiates a beautiful reaction: faith in people. As spectators of Abbas Kiarostami's cinema, *Close-Up* in particular, we witness that profound humanism that often fades in reality.

-Tatia Pilieva

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Film department shows off the new talent

The Bard film department is a fairly touchy subject among some students, especially many first-years who were not accepted into the year-long moderation class that is offered next year; however, for this year's sophomores who have just moderated, it is an exciting and wonderful place for creative expression. With exceptional professors and a plethora of classes in both film and video production, theory, and history, it is no wonder why the Bard film program ranks remarkably high on the lists of college film programs across the country.

This year's moderating sophomores displayed their knowledge of both film and video history and technology in a powerful moderation screening on the night of Wednesday, May 17, which some first-year students watched with anticipation for the upcoming year's class and others with disheartened faces.

The films displayed varied in plot (or

lack there of), aesthetics, and technical manipulation, ranging from a Hitchcockesque murder narrative which incorporated a steady tick reminiscent of the beating of the buried heart in Poe's "The Tell-tale Heart", to animated video art, to a series of lights and pipes which formed geometric images on the screen a

This year's moderating sophomores displayed their knowledge of both film and video history and technology in a powerful moderation screening.

bit reminiscent of Fernand Leger's "Ballet Mechanique."

The settings ranged from Bard hallways and woods to homes in California,

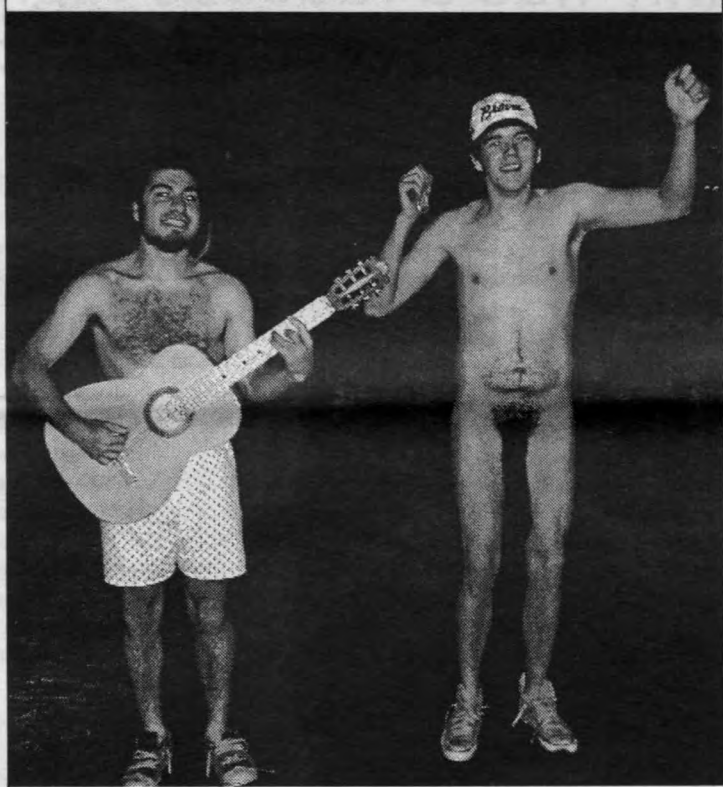
while the subjects of the films ranged from Bard students to an elderly woman, to a little girl. And the sound swung between jazz, classical, beats, pop, and natural sounds such as chewing, drinking, and faucet drips which were very clear as if recorded with a contact microphone or something of the sort. The theme of turning radio dials ran throughout a few of the films, and it was evident how important music is to the interpretation of images.

Another interesting aspect of the show was the variety of the use of black and white, color, or a mixture of the two in the films and videos. Black and white images were often layered or tinted, color images were often blurred to form imageless collages of color, and the mixture of black and white and color in one film produced an interesting aesthetic effect dividing the

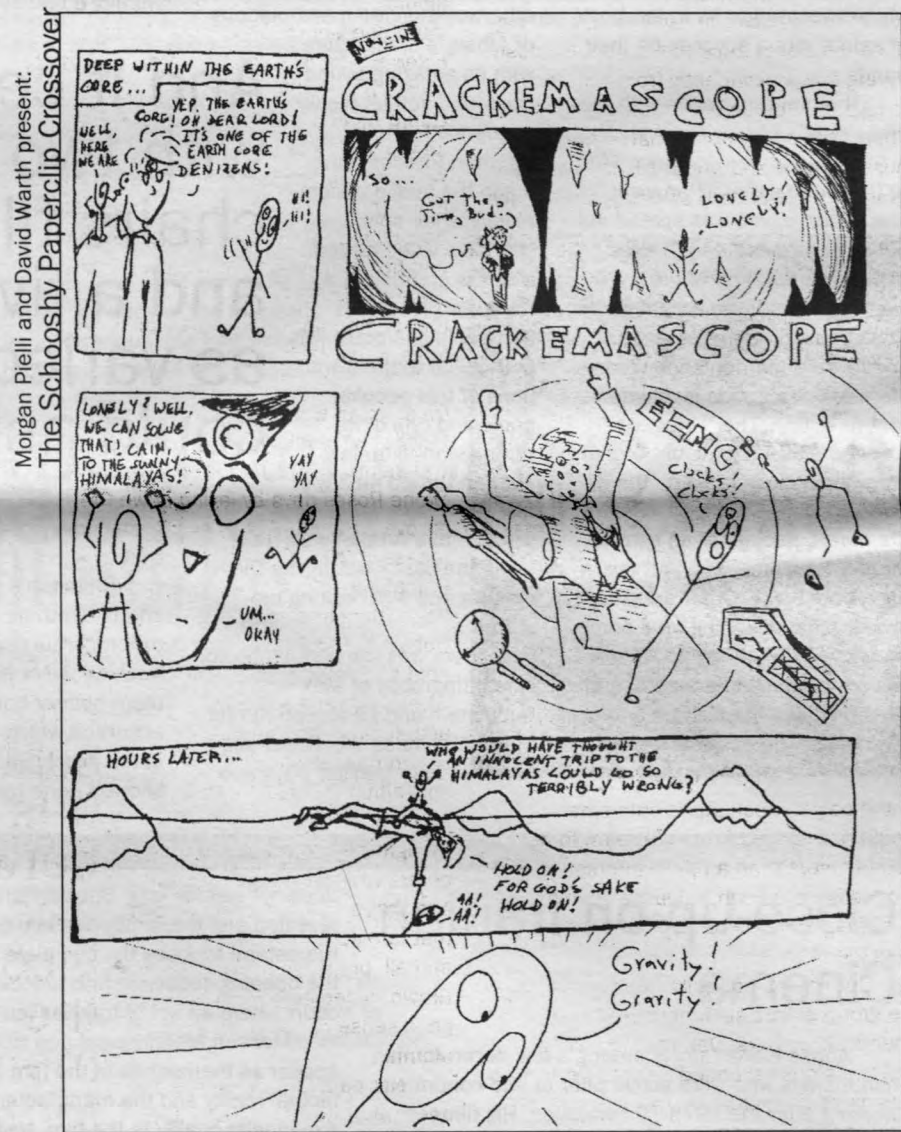
images into two different categories. What was most evident in the film show was the influence of classic filmmakers studied in film history classes. These influences were apparent in the incorporation of intercutting narratives and a moving teain scene a la Edwin S. Porter and D. W. Griffith, asynchronous sound a la Rene Clair, and intertitles a la early sound films. Of course these techniques are apparent in many films following those of these pioneering filmmakers, however, their roots are no doubt grounded in the work of these artists and were no doubt explored the film history class required to moderate into film. Thus, the now moderated film students of the sophomore class demonstrated a talent, creativity, and understanding of film which will no doubt follow them throughout their time at Bard and lead to an innovative senior show two years from now.

-Melissa Stultz

• Staff Pic #6: Mike Morini •



Sunday May the 21st, 11:38pm: Dressed in a sock and an song, Photography Editor Mike Morini (right) and roommate Raphi Gottesman serenade the inhabitants of Tewks.




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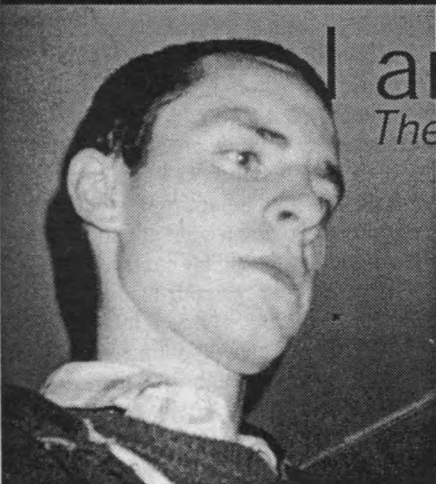


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I am the Ressurrection

The return of Bard's preeminent music writer . . .

out with one of the more audacious aural assaults of recent memory, but then music has the ability to surprise now, doesn't it??

And so the album opens with a call to "Kill All Hippies", a cheeky kiss-off to the E-fueled Summer of Love vibe previously channeled by the group, all heavy production with escalatingly layered electronic textures. Bobby Gillespie has got a big mouth, and he uses it on *Exterminator* to promote a newfound political radicalism, ranting throughout against scum-sucking capitalist ogres and what he terms on the discordant disco of "Swastika Eyes" as "a military-industrial illusion of democracy." But such self-righteous sloganeering and occasional b-boy posturing ("Pills") hardly detracts from the album's impact; instead they help fuel the fire and give Gillespie an appropriate means by which to implement the rock charisma he wields so confidently (as a substitute for a more conventional musical instrument, presumably).

Besides, the scuzzy wall of backbeat-driven sound that comprises this album can hardly be distilled to any one musical essence. The Primal Scream of *Exterminator* is a People's Army of Popular Music, a veritable supergroup of the Old Guard ringing in the new century. The album was released in Britain in late-January, the final album in Creation's catalogue (Alan McGee walked to find pastures beyond that of his, erm, Oasis, haw-haw), and has only now been released in the States. Think of it as a kick in the nuts of that demon known as Irrelevance. It's right, folks, it just feels oh-so-right.

Oh shit. Ian Brown is back with another half-baked stoned-cold monstrosity meant to awaken nostalgia for his once classic Stone Roses days by laying down the groove and gettin' busy giving it up front, maaaaan. Mani's newfound success with Primal Scream hardly excuses these self-flagellating attempts, does it??

But Wait. This isn't all shit. No, hold on... I spy a tune, and elsewhere... gimme a second... some actual direction. Oh shit, Ian Brown has released a decent solo album!! Christ! To think he had it in him, the poor chap. I thought his days were numbered, what with his shit debut and that scrap with a stewardess that landed him in Strangeways and all, but leave the mighty Ian Brown to persevere and have the good sense of releasing a proper album.

Not bad, Ian. Of course, he knew what was wrong with the first. You never could play, could you now, Ian? No, you couldn't, and it didn't help that you tried to buffer your attempt by hiding under the dread 'lo-fi' tag. That shit's over, dontcha know. Now Ian's got himself a brand new band, or rather, a bunch of fellas that are more than happy to help him write, program, and produce the rather stately (but admittedly

hardly skyscraping) *Golden Greats*. He's rather hip now, Ian is. And he shoots from the hip, so to speak. He even managed to convince up-and-coming Latin American band Babasonicos to provide a backing track for the album, the closer, "Babasonicos".

For those familiar with the Stone Roses's we-really-fucked-up-cos-we-were-really-fucked-up *Second Coming*, Ian Brown's new work is reminiscent of that album's "Begging You", giving the listener an idea of how the post-peak Roses might have sounded had they pursued a more dance flavored direction. Ian still has the ability to make one wince, as on the Led Zep-like riff driven opener "Gettin' High" (dear lord), but the feeling is rewarding. I mean, come on, we've come to expect the worse from King Monkey, and now it's something of a cliché, the wariness with which we approach his wares. Suffice to say this stuff is muiy decent. Singles like "Love Like a Fountain", "Dolphins Were Monkeys", and "Golden Gaze" complement and showcase Brown's foghorn of a voice as he does his mantra-like thang over tracks as inevitably eclectic as the roster of producers and musical collaborators. The long and short of it is: well done, Ian, sorry I doubted you. And for all you Stone Roses fans/apologists that were scared off by the import price of the disk, pat yourselves on the back and herald its domestic release, with two bonus tracks.

How do you feel about alt-country? Oh I know you like it, I know you do, you like your Palace and your Pernice, your Wilco and your Son Volt. But what about the



Walking the line, walking in the line: Jennifer Allor and Guillermo Calzadilla's drawing "Untitled" (2000). Art Club 2000's "Untitled (Puzzle Party)" (1992-1993) (below)

into its own, helped greatly no doubt by a previously noticed but heretofore remarkably prevalent soul leaning. Oh yes. Soul.

I mentioned lush. Let's just say that *Nixon* is as lush as crushed velvet on a mattress of rose petals with a bowl of cream in the middle. Too lush for you? Then stay away, *Nixon* is the lushest album likely to be released all year. Not synthetic lush, like those Fridmann-produced opuses that have been glutting the market since the success of albums like *Deserter's Songs* and *The Soft Bulletin*. More like the lush of Willie Mitchell-produced Al Green, only more so, with dense, swooning strings and freshly polished brass. See, Lambchop is really into this soul thing. They may come from Nashville and have all that Billy Sherill nonsense down, but they reckon they're not too far from Memphis, and there is no sense in their neglecting what they feel are obvious parallels between Nashville country and Memphis soul. Lambchop frontman Kurt Wagner even sings his eccentric lyrics ("It's like a theatre kiss/No, it's like a runaway piss") in an affected falsetto at times in tribute to hero Curtis Mayfield.

There's nothing ironic about the whole Lambchop schtick. Whereas on previous releases the line between tribute and parody was too often blurred by inconsistent execution and the unconventional sentiments expressed, *Nixon* is for the love of the music. It's a self-conscious exploration of music released during the Nixon era, music that the 17 members

of Lambchop grew up on. So you get a gospel-soul choir on the brilliantly chipper "Up With People," and melting slide guitars on the gorgeous "The Distance from Her to There," and so much else in between. *Nixon* by Lambchop. It's what's for dinner.

There's nothing ironic about the whole Lambchop schtick. Whereas on previous releases the line between tribute and parody was too often blurred by inconsistent execution and the unconventional sentiments expressed, *Nixon* is for the love of the music.

changing face of alt-country, eh? Ready to see it move forward, have itself a blurry redefining hell of a time?? Exhibit A: *Nixon* by Lambchop. Sure, they're on Merge. Yeah, they've been around as a pleasantly quirky blip on the scene for some time now. But *Nixon* is where the lush Countryopolitan sound of Lambchop comes



of the genre a rock star's charisma – it would have suited Primal Scream to be nothing more than a mildly interesting and productive has-been, releases such as *Vanishing Point* merely markers for the passage of time.

But no, no, not quite, Mani steps up, the group enlists such names as the Chemical Brothers, Dan the Automator, and the aforementioned Shields as well as sets aside the heroin for the speed, the result being a supercharged beast of a dance-rock album with fitting song titles like "Accelerator" (a Shields produced, Stooges-like maelstrom) and "Shoot Speed/Kill Light" (a self-explanatory manifesto of a closer). Highly unlikely that such an aged posse of the by-gone British rock establishment (Shields, Mani, and the Scream are all pushing 40) should come

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S-K continue to cool down with *Bad One*

Sleater-Kinney
All Hands On the Bad One
Kill Rock Stars, 2000

"Bearer of the flag from the beginning/Now who would have believed this riot grrl's a cynic," begins one song on Sleater-Kinney's fifth album, a surprisingly self-conscious summation of their own increasing popular appeal and corresponding loss of credibility. In some respects, *All Hands On the Bad One* does little to avoid this criticism. Following the blueprint of last year's *The Hot Rock*, it is often pop-oriented to a fault, evincing traces of the early-'80s new wave touches which have inexplicably become prevalent in riot grrl recently. Though some of their lyrics have grown more barbed and incisive, providing the two most redeeming tracks on the album, much of the second side is mired in sweet sludge, as if the Melvins' murky stew of chords somehow melded with the Bangles' struggling attempts at melancholy.

Unfortunately, Sleater-Kinney and many of their high-profile peers have begun to sound as if their primary sonic forebearer is Debbie Harry rather than Joan Jett, and I think most of us prefer the old-school punk aggression and horniness of the classic "I Wanna Be Your Joey Ramone" to the Mellotron-tinged melodrama of the new "Milkshake n' Honey." Even when Sleater-Kinney tries to embrace

the raw power of elemental rock on the promisingly-titled "You're No Rock n' Roll Fun," admittedly an incredibly catchy song, their power-pop sensibilities polish out all the rough exuberance they mean to channel. As much as they echo classic riot grrl manifestos in the first track's "I could be demure like girls who are soft for/boys who fearful of getting an earful/But I gotta rock!," the sentiment only draws attention to the continuing absence of the ragged, glorious "rock!" Sleater-Kinney once redefined in songs like "Little Babies."

This album should not be completely dismissed, despite its lack of aggression. If you're the sort of person who likes early '80s pop-rock or Byrdsy jangle-pop influences in your punk, you might find these qualities a welcome addition to their sound. While personally I'm not too sympathetic to that, I am impressed by the continuing virtuosity of Corin Tucker's astounding voice, which can leap from querulous advance to angelic shriek, and the growing complexity of Tucker's and Brownstein's conversational harmonies.

The group's skills as songwriters also remain powerful in many instances; while I found many of the attempts at straight-up rock disappointingly hollow, the title track is pretty fucking great, a moody, darker com-

position that eventually becomes a hymn to rock n' roll redemption: "You can't get to heaven with a three chord song/They called you a sinner but the people want to sing along."

The album is also redeemed by a pair of well-crafted political songs, which skewer their targets with admirable precision. Sleater-Kinney pointedly attacks the consumerist teen "culture" bullshit mas-

Seventeen magazine and "girlpower.com" instead of expanding its grassroots origin.

Sleater-Kinney also reaches beyond internecine criticism to the adept social criticism of "Was it a Lie?," pointing out the insensitivity of jaded image dilettantes content to entertain themselves with tragedy repackaged as entertainment. The song portrays a woman's life cut short by a train, an image inevitably captured by a camera "placed/Inside this awful place" and offered to public consumption when "You broadcast it in 50 states/Looped her death on the internet/And a woman's life got cheaper that day." The shifting target of the song, from viewer to "entertainment" provider, depicts the complicity of people who get off on the pornography of other people's real suffering. While the people who enjoy that sort of thing for whatever reason probably won't listen to the message of the song, its intent might be well-realized enough for them to stop imposing their amusements on the rest of us.

If Sleater-Kinney har- nessed this sort of incisive criticism, returned to the proverbial fury of "words + guitars" that characterized their previous releases, and abandoned their bubble-gum pop inclinations, they might record another classic on the level of *Call the Doctor*. As it is, *All Hands On the Bad One* is an intermittently brilliant and usually enjoyable disappointment.



Mired in sweet sludge: Corin Tucker, Janet Weiss, and Carrie Brownstein make up OlyWa's *Hot Rockers*.

querading as liberation in the past couple of years ("Everywhere you go teenage is the rage,/Inside your pants and on the front page"), as the scalding "#1 Must-Have's" former riot grrl admits that "my inspiration rests/In-between my beauty magazines and credit card bills." The song exudes the most passion of the album, excoriating the apathy of "rebel girls" growing content to buy their culture out of

Senior Rockers Move On, Scene to Rebound

The Bard music scene is going to be very different after this year's seniors move on. With so many of the Bard bands including at least one member of the senior class, it seems that the Bard scene is going to be extremely emaciated come the start of next year.

However, with the bands comprised of underclassmen that have formed this year, the question is not will there be a Bard music scene next year, but rather, what is it going to become? A new scene will have to grow at Bard, since seniors make up so much of the current scene, and it will grow from the few bands that are left to hold it together.

The Electra Complex's political hardcore songs, which incorporate feminist and earth-friendly lyrics, will no doubt provide a strong activist backbone for the music scene, and will create a strong following among kids who relate to their music.

The Bard scene will see more hardcore, less references to Jonny Cristol, and an emergence of metal, as Chocki guitarists plan, not only for a new Chockiesque band, but also for a metal side project. And members

of the Electra Complex and the now defunct Bodyguard Soundtrack and others will bring the eighties into the twenty-first century with a new 80's band side project. Also, Brian Ackley cryptically proclaimed that "there will be new wave by any means necessary."

A collaboration between members of the Electra Complex and Chocki will attempt to form a music scene independent of capital interests that is run for the kids, by the kids.

Electra Complex guitarist, John Feinstein, explains, "We want to create a scene that is not necessarily independent of the Entertainment Committee, but that will work with the Entertainment Committee and B.A.R.C. and the Student Action Center to create a music scene more connected to D.I.Y. ethics in order to book shows for bands that, while they may have a big following, are committed to their music and integrity as opposed to mere profit and money making."

Perhaps the kids will

become more emotional with the help of sophomore Rachel Jacobs and first-year Dylaina Young pioneering the female acoustic side of the current Bard scene. And perhaps Alexa Georgevich will follow up her debut Bard performance on Saturday, May 20 with more solo guitar and piano driven music. Their words will continue to touch and inspire Bard students, especially their good-sized female following, and perhaps their brevity will convince other

Chris Teret and Adam Davison will surely contribute significantly to the scene.

With Nathan Corbin embarking on his career as an international dj, we will see the emergence of first-year electronic artists Luke Venezia, Alan Newcomb, and J.P. Kingsbury, who frequently performed at the Rhinecliff Hotel parties on Thursdays this past year. Venezia and Newcomb plan to throw monthly or bi-monthly drum and bass parties on campus, incorpo-

tronic sound for the kids. Also, the emergence of other first-year students who hide out in electronic music classes, such as next year's Electronic Ensemble with Richard Teitelbaum, is a possibility.

Bard's free-form improvisational first-years, Mangerine, will continue to kick out the jams, but with a more acute angle. Bassist Jacob Gordon says, "We're shooting for more creative interactions between different styles of music and expressive modes and venues, and we're trying to be experimental with it."

Hopefully, first-year rockers The Crooked Tooth will continue rockin, and the Tell, who made an impromptu appearance at last week's "anti-censorship" show in the red room, plan to write a few more garage-rock songs and reinvent themselves as the Dirty Hearts. And hopefully Tell bassist Brendan Harman will finally start that cuddlecore band he's been talking about to represent the pop kids.

-Melissa Stultz

A new scene will have to grow at Bard, since seniors make up so much of the current scene, and it will grow from the few bands that are left to hold it together.

Bard girls to make public their hidden talents.

We can also look forward to acoustic performances by guitarists Matt Ayers and Bjorn Quenemoen who have amazed listeners this past year with their original, heart-warming songs and their soft, melodic vocals. And versatile senior musicians

rating Kingsbury and other Bard dj's into the works.

Saul Jacobowitz of American Head will remain at Bard, and hopefully continue to combine electronics and zany outfits into shows that effect both the auditory and visual senses, and Vance Stevenson will continue to provide abstract naturalized elec-

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Letters to the Editor and Community

Student Art in the Observer???

I would like to express my appreciation in the *Observer* for taking interest in covering student made art. In all my years at Bard, I had never until this semester seen coverage about senior art/photo shows, it is a much welcomed change and greatly appreciated.

BUT, I do have one complaint, in covering the art openings only the space at UBS has been addressed and well deserved. But aside from the three group shows to occur there have been four shows and a fifth soon to go up in the Fisher Arts space (each of two artists) that have received no attention. It's wonderful that the *Observer* has taken interest in doing senior art show reviews, but it seems a little empty to report on what is going on in one space and not the other. And it is unfair to those artists who have worked hard all year producing their work and I'm sure would love to bask in the glory of having something written about them in print. There is currently a show up now in the Fisher Studio arts building and a final one which opens on Saturday afternoon. A profile of either would be really nice

-Mike Bortnik

Goodbye!

Julia Munemo and myself are both leaving Bard for new adventures. Julia will be leaving her position as Residence Director. Julia and her husband Ngoni will be moving to NYC where Julia will be working at a currently undetermined position and Ngoni will be pursuing a doctorate degree at Columbia.

As for my plans, I am leaving Bard in late June and moving to Los Angeles to pursue my own academic interests in the Graduate School of Social Work at the University of Southern California. I am sure that considering my current responsibilities you will find the following facts about my future entertaining: I will be living in an apartment on campus where I am not allowed to burn candles or incense, use halogen lamps or string lights. I will be in temporary housing for my first month there. Karmic, isn't it? Of course, some of the residence halls have outdoor pools, so I must have done something right.

My deepest gratitude and respect go to the staff members at Bard. The Buildings and Grounds/Physical Plant, Chartwells, Servicemaster, Student Accounts and Student Services staff are the unsung heroes of this College. They make all the rest of what happens here

possible. I can't thank you enough for all of your assistance, both professionally and personally. Since my arrival at Bard I've been able to find, amongst the students and staff, several friendships that are my most prized acquisitions of the last two years. I look forward to keeping tabs on the happenings of this wonderful, challenging, interesting and crazy place.

Kindest regards,
Allison Bennett
Director of Residence Life

Students and Student Government

This year's student government is to be commended for the flurry of activity that has taken place on campus over the past two to three months. I have found my many meetings that have taken place over the past weeks with engaged and spirited student government representatives to be among the most enjoyable and interesting since I have come to Bard. As to the many proposals put forth by the Central Committee (which have been outlined in detail in the past several issues of the *Observer* and *Free Press*), I agree with some and disagree with others. I also disagree with many of the assumptions underlying some of the proposals and with some of the proposed solutions. However,

that is not what I have been asked to address.

Perhaps the greatest success of this year's student government has been to generate enthusiasm within the student body about student government institutions. This year's elections to key committees of student government (SLC, EPC, SJB) were the most competitive since I have been here. Many students, particularly younger ones, sought election: they did not have to be dragooned by friends hoping to make sure that all positions were filled. Now that there is such enthusiasm for government office, the real questions are: How can student government be more effective? How can it make student perspectives and concerns known to faculty and members of the administration? How can it best advocate for student needs?

These questions are of critical importance because they are about the process, efficacy and education. If the only lesson learned by the eruption of activity within student government this semester is that 'the administration' or 'the faculty' neither considers nor cares about student views and needs, then the wrong lesson has been learned. If administrators and faculty have failed vis-à-vis the student body it is because we have not engaged elected officials of student government as educators and have failed to teach them how to be more effective representatives.

... continued on next page

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Spring 2000

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• FROM THE OFFICE OF RESIDENCE LIFE •

The Office of Residence Life is pleased to announce the PC Staff for 2000-2001:

Biek (Prakirati) Satasut New Cruger, left side
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We believe that Peer Counselors fulfill a vital role in our community, and are very excited to welcome them to our staff.

Observer Editorial Policy

The *Bard Observer* is one of Bard College's several student-run publications. It is published every two weeks, on the following dates, with six issues planned per semester: February 28, March 20, April 10, April 24, May 8 and May 22.

The *Bard Observer* encourages the submission of art work, photography, responses to editorials and opinion pieces, and letters to the editor and community. It offers free advertising space for student organization events. The deadline for submission is the Thursday prior to the date of publication. Text must be sent on a 3.5" floppy disk in Microsoft Word(c) format (for Macintosh(c) or PC), with accompanying double-spaced hard copy, via campus mail to "The Observer."

Opinions expressed in the Comics or Opinions sections do not necessarily represent those of The *Bard Observer* or its staff. Claims and allegations in these sections are those of the author/s alone. The *Bard Observer* reserves the right to edit for grammar, spelling, and coherency. Anonymous submissions require editorial consultation with author/s after submission. The *Bard Observer* copyright 2000.

Global Activism continued . . .

threatened with the corporation moving production if they raise their voices. Many human rights NGOs (non-governmental organizations) have concerns with the ways in which corporations do business in the developing countries that they often operate in to take advantage of the cheap labor and lenient regulations. Such NGO's have gained a relatively strong voice in international bodies like the United Nations partly because of global effort on behalf of the rights of poor workers.

But it is not just the conditions under which products are made or the environmental hazards that production may pose that have people organizing opposition. It is the more indescribable impacts of the methods of corporations to sell their goods. Marketing has evolved into a science. Millions a year are invested in psychological investigations of what makes the most effective advertising. The result has been more effective advertising, and to some this has become something of an invasion. Ad firms know that in order to make something attractive, it must have appeal that is relevant to the lives of its

target customers. This means advancing research into people's lives based on the specifics of their lives: gender, age, race, income, etc. But what seems to be most offensive to people are the cultural implications of sophisticated marketing. People feel as if they have become alienated into simply a receptacle for products. They feel that they themselves are being "commodified" by the brand names that more and more are building the world that is most favorable to marketing. What is "cool" is no longer necessarily doing your own thing; it may be that being cool is doing what everyone else is doing. It all depends on what the masses think. And if influencing what the masses think of as cool isn't effective business, then I don't know what is.

Proliferating influence by corporations on people's personal lives and minds has created a new kind of global, social activism and commentary. The role of the "Culture Jammer" is developing. Jamming culture means a lot of things. It means mocking the corporate media, developing alternative media sources, altering or "reclaiming" public spaces, graffiti and public art, and cre-

ative forms of protest that give people a feeling of reclaiming the culture that is theirs and rejecting the culture that is being made for them. People are jamming in the name of the environment and other issues as well. As the wealth of the world is increasingly accumulating at the top, more people are feeling used and searching for ways to rebel. The Internet has provided an ideal palate for countering corporate advertising tactics.

Whatever one chooses to make of the facts and rhetoric that are springing up around the idea of globalization, it needs to be acknowledged that there are some seriously clashing forces. Whether you consider someone who paints over a billboard with a political message a vandal, or someone who trespasses in order to plant a community garden a criminal, you have to admit that there is some very active discontent being coupled with some very creative action. Whether the people who gathered in Seattle and DC are uninformed youth searching for that sixties fix, or a new movement with strong ideals of change, there are a lot of them. And they seem to be growing.

Letters continued . . .

What do I have in mind specifically?

Elected officials should fulfill their obligations outlined in the student constitution (which it is clear that only a handful of students, including those holding office, have read). The student body at large should demand that the elected officials fulfill their mandates. What are some of the requirements of elected officials as outlined in the constitution? Here are a few: the Student Life Committee or designated representatives 'shall meet weekly with the staff of the Dean of Students Office' to review existing and proposed college policies and to represent the Student Association and 'shall hold office hours or open meetings at least twice a month' to learn the views of the student body; the Educational Policies Committee 'shall meet regularly with the Dean of the College and with members of the Faculty' to address 'educational policies, practices and proposals of concern to the Student Association'; it is the responsibility of the chair of the EPC to attend faculty meetings and the student representatives to the Board of Trustees to attend 'all meetings' of the Bard College Board of Trustees.

Why is it important that the committees, chairs and representatives fulfill these and other constitutional obligations? The answer is simple: in doing so, they provide the voice that the student body deserves and the feedback and input from which the administration and faculty need to make effective policy and personnel decisions. When elected student officials do not fulfill their constitutional obligations to represent the views of the student body, their assertions that 'the administration' and 'the faculty' disregard

student opinion and ignore student input ring hollow.

A few related points should be brought up here. First, student government officials should know the appropriate administrators or faculty members who are responsible for specific decisions. I found it humorous earlier this year when a student (who is not an elected representative of the student government) asked if I would add my signature to a petition proposing that the campus center open early to broadcast the Cubs-Mets opener from Japan. As a Cubs fan, I was happy to sign (I was the 110th member of the community to do so), but asked whether the initiators had already asked Allen Josey to open the Campus Center. The answer was no. I called Allen and it took about 10 seconds for him to agree to open the center for the event. Why not ask Allen before expending such energy? Here, administrators (including this author) have the responsibility to clarify lines of authority and to facilitate contacts if necessary. Students, however, especially elected officials, should ask. Second, make use of the opportunities you have to meet with senior administrators. I am always shocked at how few students attend the Dean's and President's teas. Have a question? There's your chance.

I am running against the Observer deadline, so I wanted to offer a few more thoughts not necessarily in any particular order.

- As far as participation in student government is concerned: this year's government is taking the right approach in planning to inform next year's first year students about student government during

L&T. Their efforts will only work, however, insofar as the first forum, the budget forum, is taken seriously. A bunch of drunken students taking off their clothes to win the right to comment on a \$70,000 budget does not exactly convey the idea that student government is a serious business. Is it a surprise that in the past it has been difficult to get leaders for this undertaking? I understand that this practice has ended. Good.

- Be wary of petitions. Petitions can be useful, but they do not necessarily represent the views of people most affected by policies. It is much more enlightening to know the views of residents of Tewksbury concerning the potential opening of noisy social spaces in the dormitory than it is someone who lives in Manor or off-campus. (The one Tewks resident voting while I was at the petition table announced that he was voting against opening the old kitchens due to the noise). Similarly, the views of first-year students about trailers are more salient than those of seniors who deem them inappropriate. Many people will sign petitions when they do not know or care about the issues at hand. (For example, of the 110 people who signed the petition for the Cubs-Mets game—which the Cubs won—no more than ten attended.) Consult with those most affected.

- The idea of community and supposed loss of it needs much more time than I can give now. However, a few points worth mentioning. The fabric of the college has not fallen apart because of the loss of DeKline. There are, however, many changes taking place in the College and beyond which we all need to reflect on vis-à-vis our sense of community. Wired

dorms mean students in their rooms communicating with people thousands of miles away instead of their neighbours. More shuttles mean more students in Red Hook and Tivoli instead of at Bard. The proliferation of community service activities among Bard students, be it with disadvantaged children in Hudson, battered women in Poughkeepsie or any of the many other student-led projects means fewer people hanging around DeKline. Are these bad? Should we turn the clock back? Let's think carefully before making easy prescriptions.

- As far as building community is concerned, I have two suggestions: house more faculty in new dormitories (this has been successful at other universities) and build a bar on campus which might serve as a convivial place for upper class students and faculty to mix (maybe Albee Social??). One idea floated by some students at one of our meetings is to build a sense of community by adding a television to the coffee shop or foyer in the campus center. This is one of the worst ideas I have heard in a long time. I call on all respectable citizens of this community to resist, through civil disobedience if necessary, any such plan.

Baccalaureate begins in five minutes and my time is up. I wish to thank all of the members of student government for doing such a wonderful job this year and for raising serious issues that we can discuss over the coming years. We may disagree on many things, but you have done this community a service by asking important questions.

—Jonathan Becker
Dean of Studies

Hey Non-Students! Subscriptions?

Well, why not? Another semester has come and gone and we're already gearing up for Fall 2000. Will you be informed about all the breaking news at Bard? You can get six **big** issues of the *Observer* for just \$10! They will arrive at your door every other week in a manila envelope! Make checks payable to "The Bard Observer" and send to Bard College Box # 1457, Annandale, NY 12504. (We're actually serious about this...)

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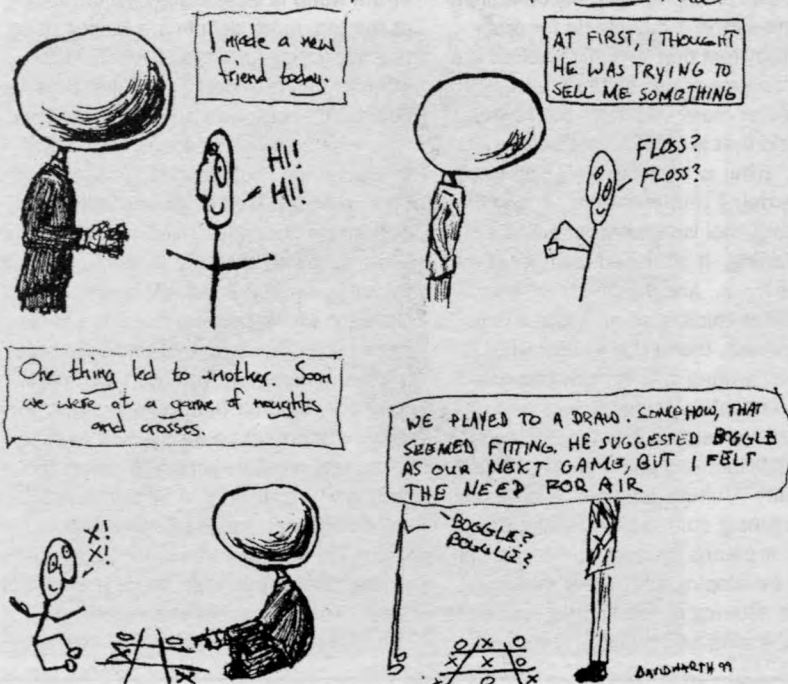
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STARRING JOHNNY EFFIGY and Mr. SCHOOOSH Face.



As it turned out, he wanted me to teach him how to floss. His floss was cinnamon-flavored.



AFTER I SHOWED HIM, WE FLOSSED FOR SOME TIME, THEN, WITH THE SWEET TANG OF CINNAMON ON OUR BREATHS, WE DISCUSSED OTHER ASPECTS OF HYGIENE.

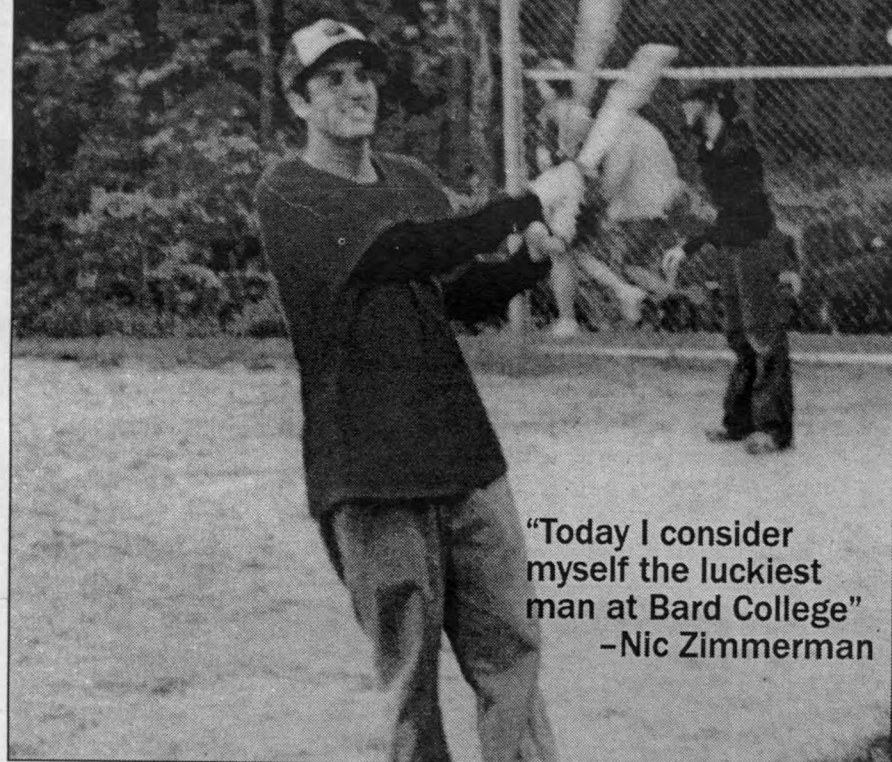


We were halfway to the arboretum when a hundred-ton weight fell on his head. I walked the rest of the way looking carefully up.



A Castros Chronicle:

A four year legacy ends,
sans fat lady.



"Today I consider myself the luckiest man at Bard College"
—Nic Zimmerman

INTRAMURAL SOFTBALL at Bard College is an institution to say the least. Scores of otherwise diligent students put aside their school books, photo chemicals, computer editing equipment, oil paints, multimedia installation materials, Bunsen burners and wander through the humid spring air to a hideaway just east of main campus where bats and balls and beers rule. An innocent student, perhaps sneaking in the back door of Kline, can hear the hollers and the crack of the bat wafting over the Gym and parking lot. There is no point in trying to resist.

The season of 2000 promised to be one of the best ever, teams lining up to play seven or eight games each before the playoffs even began. April followed its

assignment and showers left a wake of rainouts. But all the teams seemed to find enough dry days to qualify for the double elimination tournament and the season flowered into excitement in the first few weeks of May.

There are a lot of teams in the league. A lot of teams come and go. And certainly each year there are few that we see and realize they are a force to be reckoned with. This year we saw the Ohm Runners' trickery on the base paths, the Delicious Milititia's paralyzing defense and long ball tendencies, Jackie Harris' just-here-to-play-ball-and-to-win attitude, and the Wild Bunch's dumbfounding trash talk, and knew the spirit was there. But for me—and I know I'm biased—there is

Jack Lewis



If they don't win it's a shame: (left) Castros captain Nic Zimmerman takes a swing; (right) Awaiting the second half of a double header, the "collective" initiates a tail-gate party out of the back of Nathan's truck

one team that needs to be recognized for years of contribution and innovation in the world of Bard Softball.

The Castros began four years ago on the now defunct ball field next to Tewks. A group of First Year startups with nothing better to do in the afternoon but toss the ball around or take batting practice formed a team and named it "Castros." This name had several significances: the Cuban dictator and former big league quality pitcher, Fidel, the fact it sounds like Astros, and the nickname of Beach Carey's dog, Josh, neutered long ago. Once the Castros took the field there was no doubt the team had heart, even if winning wasn't always on the agenda.

Over the years the team has lost and lost again, but has never given up. The Castros are known for their last-inning near comebacks, and who's to say it isn't fun falling short one run in a valiant rally. Sophomore year the team instituted the red shirt as uniform and while the intended intimidation didn't always pan out, the allegations of blatant Communism began in McCarthyistic fashion.

In their fourth and final season the Castros rallied to a less than embarrassing end. Winning one or two regular season games and three playoff games facing elimination, including the rematch against the feisty Faculty team that really needed

to go down. The road ended where it so often does for a Castro team: against the Ohm Runners, or whatever team Tony Stone is on this week. But the Castros didn't go down without a fight. The pep band consisting of banjo, snare drum, bassjo, and toy piano played throughout and the team didn't let infield fielding errors get them down. Lou Thomas could be heard leading the cheer, "When I say Cas, you say Stros, Cas-Stros, Cas-Stros, when I say Ass, you say Hole, Ass-Hole, Ass-Hole." Nick Zimmerman made two unbelievable catches in centerfield. Stu Krimko pitched a few strikeouts. Mike Famighetti, Adam Davison, Deirdre Fughey, Jess Perlitz and the rest of the Castros managed to string together a few hits and score a half dozen runs.

Whether winning gloriously or losing gloriously, the Castros have fun and that's what the game is about here at Bard, I hope. Maybe the championship is not at hand for this crew of veterans, they have certainly acquired a piece of Bard Intramural history. Maybe it will be the Militia or the Ohm Runners or 2 Drink Minimum that steal the title but it was the Castros that stole our hearts.

—David "Don't Panic" Janik

• SPORTS! RAP-UP by Mike Morini •

Alan Webb, a junior at Reston, Virginia high school is seconds away from being the first high schooler in 33 years to run the mile in under 4 minutes. . . the current record, 3:55.3, was set in 1965 by Jim Ryun. . .

Apparently Fusaichi Pegasus, winner of the Kentucky Derby, is, "crazy good". . . "Pegasus" is favored in 14 out of 16 publications to win the upcoming Preakness Stakes. . . the other two favored horses are Red Bullet, who is a fresh horse who did not race in the Derby, and High Yield. . . but he lost, yesterday, to Red Bullet, another horse. . . Cardinals star Mark McGwire smashed three homers on Thursday to surpass Mickey Mantle's career record of 536. . .

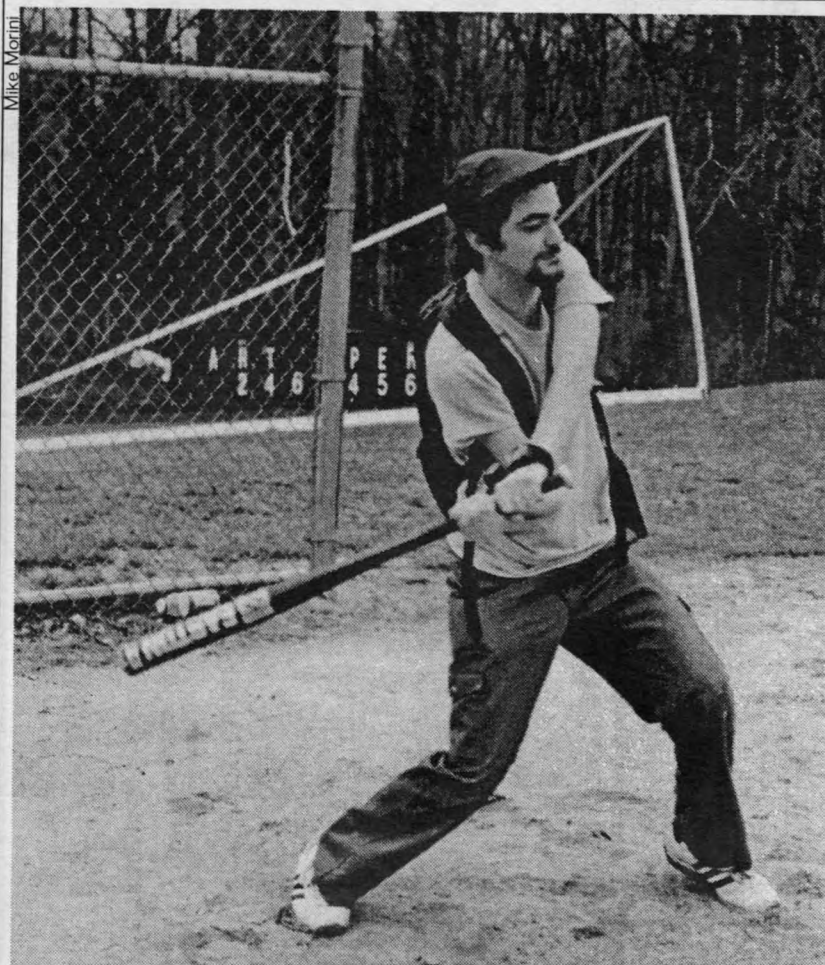
Tiger Woods had a hard time at the opening round at the Deutsche Bank Open. . . he had this to say about his bad experience, "It's hard to play fast when there are so many people inside the ropes and photographers walking down the middle of the fairway. . . I had some problems with the cameras a few times. They got me on my downswing at hole No.8 with a flash." . . in this tournament he used a Nike brand ball for the first time in tournament play. . . zoinks! . . the golfer is unsure if he is going to make the switch from Titeist, who pays Woods 2 million to use its clubs and balls. . .

Defending champion of the Italian Open tennis tournament, Venus Williams, was beaten by 17-year old Australian, Jelena Dokic, 6-1, 6-2. . . the Boston Red Sox are 1 game ahead of the New York Yankees in the American League East. . . the Red Sox' pitcher Pedro Martinez leads the American League in strike outs with 88. . . Chicago Cubs right fielder Sammy Sosa is leading the National League in runs batted in with 42

. . . in local sports news. . .

The Bard men's tennis team ended the season 6-3, it was the team's first winning season in many, many years or ever. . . Elizabeth Gluck, a junior at Our Lady of Lourdes High School in Poughkeepsie, pitched a perfect game and the Lourdes won the game 1-0.

See you next year, sort of. . .



An Aspiring Superstar: Sports aficionado Jed Clarke shined during this Spring's softball season. He finished out the year with 159 homers, 823 RBIs, and, in the middle of a dangerous lightning storm, pitched a no-hitter while flying a kite.

• EDITORIAL by Jacob Gordan •

A Globalized World Means Globalized Activism

There are those who will contest the concept of globalization, saying that it is nothing that has not been happening steadily since the industrial revolution and even before it. But most people will admit that things are changing faster now than they have in previous eras. Globalization is a hard term to pin down because it clearly doesn't apply to one sphere of society exclusively. Some of the boldest symbols of globalization, like the IMF and the World Bank are not particularly new bodies and definitely existed before the term globalization appeared. But whatever globalization is, it is making differences in people's lives as they try to grapple with the numerous variables that make up the phenomenon.

Activism in communities and on campuses is spreading. College students have made some admirable headway in humanitarian causes like cracking down on corporate use of sweatshop labor (something that has expanded as corporations expand). It is not as if students have not always been concerned, but there have been some powerful new convergences as they start to tackle some bigger foes. Robert L. Borosage of the *Boston Globe* sees the student organizing around free trade as something very influential, that "They have found the leverage to move not just their campuses but global corporations—and maybe even the entire debate about globalization." Students are finding themselves being taken more seriously by mainstream politics, the media and in corporate boardrooms on issues like sweatshops. And according to Borosage, "They have just begun".

Some of the most solidified theories on globalization involve four factors: the extensivity of global networks, the intensity of global interconnectedness, the velocity of global flows, and the impact of global interconnectedness. What these mean is that global groups and individuals can make impact over larger areas, with greater effectiveness, involving more connections, at faster rates, and with greater effect. Skeptics of Globalization (with a capital G) would find it hard to deny that these factors are developing at a fast rate and that global entities are utilizing these new channels in new ways. Heightened global interconnectedness is something that has changed virtually every

field. Government has encountered new forms and some rather serious problems. Business has utilized global channels with amazing fiscal success. Global markets are including and excluding whole countries based on new grounds. Finance has expanded, human rights concerns have gained greater access, and information is available in ways that it has never before been. Glenn Prickett of Conservation International, an environmental protection group, told the *New York Times* that, "...thanks to globalization and the Internet, power is now diffused, global companies are now much more exposed, and organizations like ours much better positioned to offer solutions." But there is clearly some hesitation and suspicion. Some feel that globalization is leaving more destruction in its wake than it is empowering to the people.

The global trade practices of the WTO and the global lending practices of the IMF have brought about a global opposition that is able to use many of the same methods of making global connections that the bodies themselves use. Since the technology that is facilitating global interconnectedness is relatively new, citizens have more of an opportunity to use it to their advantage the same way that large global organisms do. And since groups such as the IMF operate in so many areas of the globe, with specifically tailored programs, diverse groups of people can agree on their dissatisfaction if not their individual grievances.

And so, a global activist community is emerging. People from different sides of the earth who have never met are teaming up to oppose forces that affect them both. This seems a natural progression as people will join in a common cause and now have both the cause and outlets to do so. But what is happening at the same time is that a global solidarity is developing for local issues as well international.

Global solidarity means helping others in their struggle even if their struggle is thousands of miles away. The concept of solidarity in struggle is not something new. White activists from the north were traveling down south to join the civil rights movement in the sixties. And while there have been global concerns for the human rights of people in far away counties, it has more often in the



Happygrads: Lou Thomas, Gretchen Hogue, and Beech Carey tried on their gowns early on Sunday afternoon. They, along with 271 other seniors, will graduate this Saturday. Horray!

past been in the form of aid and not support in organized struggles.

Activists holding a several thousand-person rally in DC for the retrial of Mumia Abu Jamal were shocked to learn that almost TEN thousand had gathered in Berlin the month before. Mumia Abu Jamal is a journalist/cabdriver from Philadelphia, currently on death row. But the world has started to take notice of things that they can relate to their own lives and discomforts. As government becomes more global with its practices and concerns, so do the people.

But the power of government may not be gaining strength as one might assume. Many theorize that alternative centers of influence are taking control away from the state. Specifically, the talk is of the corporation. The role of the multi-national corporation (MNC) is one that is more complex than just the supplying of goods and services. National economies are becoming extensive-

ly influenced by large corporations to the point that involvement in the politics of the state is inevitable. Tax incentives and labor advantages are common factors in the decisions of MNCs. The US has spent billions in corporate bailouts to aid and keep its valuable businesses as one of the powerful abilities of a MNC is to move anywhere in the world based on the most favorable conditions. There is no longer any real reason for a large corporate body to be based close to the center of production or to have all of its branches in one country or on one continent.

Resistance to the growing role of the large corporation is on many levels. It is a mixed bag for government while on one hand the money and jobs are favorable, the gradual loss of power especially in small countries is disconcerting. Unions have strong issues with MNC's as they are often made impotent to decide their conditions and are

... continued on page 14

This is the last *Observer* issue of the semester! But next year, there will be several editorial positions opening up. Perhaps one of them is made for you. Call X7131 or drop an email to observer@bard.edu if yer interested.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

• NEWS •

Cover Story:

For the Love of doG, by John Garrett, p. 2

A golden age for dogs is in store for Bard's canine community after their long years of exile come to an end

Fed to State: New Court Rulings, by Deirdre Faughey, p. 3

Supreme Court rules against sexual assault survivors' right to sue in federal court

Bard News, US News, World News. . .!, pgs. 4-5

Rockefeller U. and Bard, Vermont and Gay Marriage, Israel and Palestine

25 Years with Botstein, by Michael Haggerty, pgs. 6-7

Leon spills the beans about Bard then and now—and the Bard that will be



• ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT •

Illuminating the Elemental, by Brian Ackley, p. 8

Sameer's senior project recontextualizes the Chapel

Senior Filmmakers Reclaim Olde Gym, by David Janik, p. 9

Senior project films recontextualize the Olde Gym

I am the Resurrection, by Scott Staton, p. 11

Perpetual critic returns with 1200 words of "pure" opinion

Senior Rockers Move On, Scene to Rebound, by Melissa Stultz, p. 12

The Music Editor rounds up the Bard music scene and foreshadows what's to come



• OPINIONS/EDITORIAL • SPORTS! • COMICS •

A Castros Chronicle, by David Janik, p. 15

A tribute to Bard's legendary Communist sluggers

Comics, p. everywhere

The *Observer* illustrators play switch-a-roo